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ON THE GO

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SADAT★X

HOW THE EAST WAS ONE

What's G-O-D spelled backwards? C-O-W-B-O-Y!

Wu-Tang Clan did the Kung Fu and the Gambino thing, Biggie and the Junior M.A.F.I.A. did the big willie player thing, Nas did the Colombian drug lord thing (unless Escobar is really his last name), The Bootcamp Click is real serious about their army thing (I'm still sore from the 10,000 push-ups I had to do after I was late to interview them), and now... leather chaps and Frye boots are gonna be the new style because Sadat X is taking it back to the very old school.

OTG: Since you're the new sheriff in town, I wanted to ask you about some of your favorite cowboy movies.

X: I like the Clint Eastwood joints. The HANG EM HIGH joint. THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY is a classic. And then there's a couple of joints that I don't even really be knowin' the names, man, I just be catchin 'em on the late night.

OTG: How did you feel about Clint as Dirty Harry?

X: Oh yeah, Clint was always on some real smooth shit. You never seen Clint get all wild and lose it. In any of his flicks he never lost it, wild where he was out of control. He was always nice and smooth. You know, he would take a couple of lumps sometimes, he'd take a lump or two, but he always kept his and held it down.

OTG: How about THE UNFORGIVEN?

X: That was kinda slick, word! I like that joint. He was a quick trigger and all a that. Yeah, that was kinda slick.

OTG: What did you think about Mario Van Peebles as a cowboy in POSSE?...Honestly.

X: It was kinda corny, man, I mean, I like Mario, but he was kinda tight in that. He didn't have too much flavor. I don't know, he coulda had a little more style. I think I mighta finessed that a little differently.

OTG: And Big Daddy Kane?

X: Now Kane was Aiight!. Kane was on some Father Time, gambling, did it just the way he woulda. If Kane woulda been around back then I woulda seen him in just that gear, fly like that, talkin' that shit, 'cause that's Kane.

OTG: Tone Loc?

X: Tone Loc did a good job, too. And big Zeus, and the little man wit' the glasses, they all did pretty good.

Now, this wouldn't be an official article about Sadat if we didn't mention the rumors of a Brand Nubian re-union...so?

X: We still gonna do this Brand Nubian re-union thing, we just don't know exactly how it's gonna be done yet. We done a couple of songs for it, so it should be comin', hopefully by the winter time.

..ROUND 'EM UP

...RAWHiiiiiiiide!

the Extra P goes for extra bases

The main question on everybody's mind these days is where the hell is he at? Actually, that was the question in '93, when we first interviewed him for this publication. Now, most people are past the point of caring, or never heard of him in the first place. That's troubling, but Hip-Hop moves fast, and those who don't move with it get forgotten.

But, damn, how could you forget The Large Professor? Main Source's *Breaking Atoms* is one of the greatest records of any genre - ever. That album has a vibe that you might find on an old Flying Dutchman record. The Large Professor's approach was mature and refined, like a well schooled jazz man. He followed that effort up with "Fakin' the Funk", a single that was deemed a classic before it was even pressed up on wax. It also was the first salvo fired in the war of the complicated versus the hard.

Sadly, current statistics compiled from the latest Billbored charts show Hard beating complicated 666 to 5 in the bottom of the 8th. Soon come the black-sock clad MC's ready to swing for the fence. Artists like The Professor, De La Soul, and The Roots, whose music defies formulas have had a tough time on the basepaths. De La came up with a home run at their first at-bat.

Main Source might've done better if they hadn't got hit with a Wild Pitch, but it ain't hard to tell that Nas got extra bases in part due to having The Extra P in the dugout. The Roots had a mighty bat, and a strong swing, but they couldn't connect with the ball. So Warriors, you got to second, but it's a long way home.

Things to do to get hip hop back on track:

1. Throw popcorn chicken at bad A+R people.

OTG: C'mon man, I know this label got into hip hop last week - how do the A+R's tell you they like your record? Do they say, "Yo B, your record is mad stupid! It's fresh, phat, and fly!"

Ex: (Laughs into his hand, waving away the tape recorder.)

2. Boo bad MC's. Throw empty juice cartons at them.

OTG: Have you ever caught wreck?

Ex: I'm saying, yo.

OTG: Is there a cure?

Ex: I catch it, yo.

OTG: So, I guess you caught it bad.

Ex: It means catching recreation, recreational skills.

OTG: recognition?

Ex: Yeah, catch recognition.

Steve: So when they say, "Back to wreck shop", What do they mean?

Max: That's really to catch wreck, like a car wreck.

Ex: Like Wreckx-In-Effect? I dunno man.

3. Tell Shaq to stick to rebounding, Dieon to end zone dancing, and James Brown to stay retired.

OTG: So, we're gonna get you to do this interview with James Brown, and you can call him on all his bullshit.

Ex: 'Hello Clown? James Clown? Clown Brown? How old are you? Really?'

OTG:He's smoked so much PCP that even when he's dead he'll still jump out of his grave and dance.

Ex: I just get hair care tips from him. Who's the guy that did "Tutti Fruity"? Oh Little Richard.

OTG: Oh, that's a whole different stylee. But without him, there'd be no Prince, no Micheal Jackson, maybe no Al Sharpton. They're all activists in the Hair Hall of Fame, right there with Kid.

Ex: Yeah, Kid's got some locks now.

4. Don't obey your thirst, Don't keep it real with Coke. Ignore any ad campaigns that uses rap as a marketing tool.

OTG: So, whussup with that commercial you did for Sprite?

Ex: I knew you were gonna ask that. I dunno, they hit me at the right time I guess.

5. Work on your floor work, practice your tag, busta rhymes.

Ex: I like how y'all support the graff. Actually, that's what I'm doing community service for - writing.

OTG: Get outta here. So you were in the 3 yard, putting the finishing touches on your top-to-bottom, and the vandal squad rolled on you, right?

Ex: Ha ha. Naw, I was out there just bullshitting. We were out the day before New Years, me and my man C-Low, just bugging. I like graff though, man. I'm wrapped up in it. (We drove up and down highways in Queens looking for the Extra P picking up trash, but I guess he got on a special undercover detail.)

6. Tell a real MC his lyrics matter to you.

OTG: Has anyone told you that they really appreciated your music?

Ex: No. A lot of my shit is thrown derogatory at niggas. One time though, this kid came up to me on some tears shit; He was crying, saying, "Yo, I'm from Canada, I'm your favorite fan." That shit was buck-buck-buck wild, kid.

7. Drop Math.

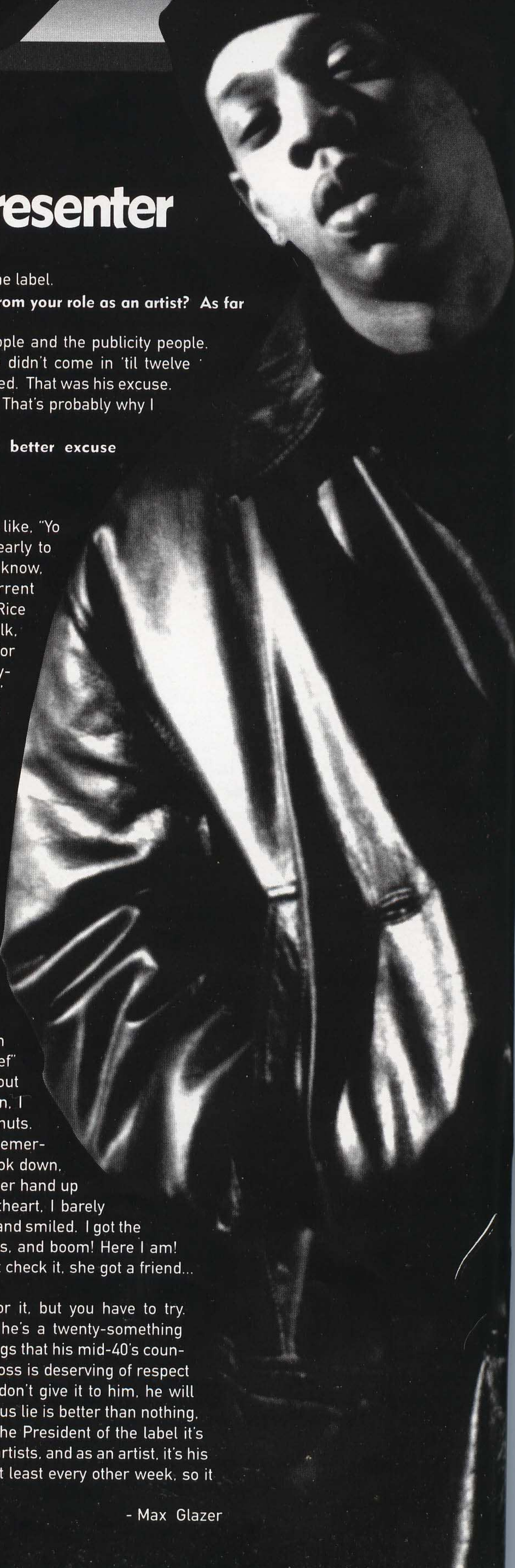
Ex: Y'know the god's faces are shiny because they don't eat pork

By a show of hands, how many hate what Hip-Hop has mutated into these days? Okay put them down. You 3 hoes who didn't raise your hand can go scrub the urinals now. For the rest of you, make an effort to let the artists in the game know that their music matters to you. Personally, I like Bone Thugz, I like Crucial Conflict, I can sincerely vibe off of their vibey-vibe-vibe. However, when an artist connects not only on an emotional level, but an intellectual level, like the Extra P does, then there has to be an award for Extra effort. That would go a long way in getting the game away from the glamour and glitz gulch it's currently engulfed in.

– Clyde Stubblefield

JAY-Z

The Man, The Music, The Brooklyn Representer



The fly Wall Street office? He joked about leaving the window open so we could maybe overhear some hot stock tips, so if you see Roc-A-Fella pulling a leveraged buy out on Time Warner, you heard it here first. And my man said, "We're trying to be a great company overall, not just a great black company, but a great company." So, you never know, all you rap muh-fuckers that's pourin' all your money into Moet may soon be able to go see your peoples at Roc-A-Fella Investment Brokers and start buildin' that little nest egg, with the help of your personal financial advisor Sean Carter, or perhaps his partner Dame Dash. Those two along with Kareem "Bigg" Burke run the Roc, and they got plans, baby. Plans for a multi-media, multi-lateral, multi-million dollar company bringing you the finest in film, fashion, a fat record here and there, and assorted other treats.

"In the movies, we takin' things from our lives, just like the records, but with the visuals to 'em. So, we got like four movies in development. You know, and the clothing. I'm a well dressed young man, you know, I like to think so. I'm not gonna go into it like that, but I'ma give somebody my ideas, and I know some things I like, but can't fit, like Versace. Like, things that can't really fit a person, but make it big enough, cause I know people like to wear their clothes big. Who gonna walk around with tight clothes on? Make it big enough, and affordable, you know - all tight on the bottom? Nobody wants that.."
Nobody except Prince.
"Yeah, but who wants to dress like Prince?"

Well I must say, that little lavender lover gets quite a lot of sexy young chickens, so he must be doing something right. I don't know if it's those tight-ass pants he wears, or that dashing facial hair that he's got. Maybe it's the fact that he's a goddamn certifiable rock star. Or perhaps it's that sexual ambiguity act that he's got going. Maybe I should try that, because tight pants just make me too freakin' uncomfortable. I have to keep repositioning the defensemen, if you know what I mean.

"Some of the things, they be nice, you like the way it's cut, and they be all small."
Versace for Big and Tall?
"Yeah, but not at Versace prices."

Jay-Z's visions of sugar plums don't stop there...

"We gonna try to get into everything. We trying to get Rock & Roll groups up here also. We gonna have to learn about that. I'm tyrin' to learn now, I'm watching Green Day, I watch MTV. We gonna branch out into everything. At least we can say we tried."
I'm sayin', what kind of success do you think you could have with a Rock & Roll group?
"We don't know, 'Cause i gotta be honest, we know nothin' about Rock & Roll, not a thing. But that's the challenge. That's the challenge right there."
Spanish music?
"Yeah, why not? They on the dance chart."

Jay-Z's "Ain't No Nigga" is mega-large, but people still don't seem to recognize him, because when he's in a club and the DJ drops the aforementioned disc, "People knock me down to get to the dancefloor!". So, when you hear that first bar of "Seven Minutes of Funk", hold onto the wall 'cause there's about to be a tidal wave of rump shakers headed to the dancefloor. An ambitious young man, Mr. Jay-Z is not contented to remain in the role of rap star. He's also COO (Chief Operating Officer) of the label.
What do you do up here aside from your role as an artist? As far as day-to-day operations.
"Yell at the radio promotions people and the publicity people. Like, I called the guy today. He didn't come in 'til twelve o'clock, and he told me he was tired. That was his excuse. Wow! That really pissed me off. That's probably why I got a headache."
He couldn't come up with a better excuse than that?
"No! Just Tired. Just, I'm Tired."

Me, personally, I woulda been like, "Yo Jay, bus' it right. I got up mad early to watch the today show, 'cuase you know, I'm always keepin' up on current events an' shit. I ate my little Rice Krispies with the chocolate milk, laced up my Lugz an' headed for the trizain, paid my fare and everything, and this baby is chuggin' along like the Little Engine That Could an' shit, when all of a sudden I seen this smoke like in Japan, when those crazy ass terrorist fuckers tried to get on some chemical warfare shit in the subway. I'm like YO!, fuck this, I got radio stations to call and get these adds on for my man Jay's new shit. So, I crouch down kinda low and start throwin' elbows like I was Dennis Rodman or sump'in, knockin' everybody out the way. Then, I was almost at the end of the train. Yo, I swear to god, twenty feet and I'd a been out, when this old "where's the beef" lookin' gramma stuck her cane out into the aisle, and THWACK!! Son, I thought I was gonna cough up my nuts. Next thing I know, I'm layin in the emergency room at Saint Vincent's. I look down, and this sexy-ass nurse has got her hand up my hospital gown. I said, "sweetheart, I barely know you...", she looked up at me and smiled. I got the digits, slid into my Karl Kani jeans, and boom! Here I am! Now I know it's twelve o'clock, but check it, she got a friend...

So he probably wouldn't go for it, but you have to try. People seem to think that since he's a twenty-something mogul, he's not so strict about things that his mid-40's counterparts take real serious. But a boss is deserving of respect regardless of his age, and if you don't give it to him, he will take it . So telling him an outrageous lie is better than nothing, knucklehead. And of course, as the President of the label it's his responsibility to jerk all of the artists, and as an artist, it's his responsibility to flip on the label at least every other week, so it all evens out.

- Max Glazer

ter·ror·ism

n. The political use of terror and intimidation.

-The American Heritage Dictionary

- Does Moms or Pops support the African National Congress (ANC), or send money to a church in Cuba for hungry children? What about being involved in a progressive grassroots movement for financial equality?
- Somebody was trying to jack your homeboy, he pulls out a .22 to scare the kid, shoots, and hits a stop sign.
- How much money does Farrakhan have in his account, and what countries has he been visiting lately?
- Have you ever sent money in to those poor starving children you see on T.V.? Their sad faces lookin' at you while you eat your slice?
- All of the people above are now considered TERRORISTS by the U.S. Government! Does this include you?

According to the newly passed Anti-Terrorist Bill, all of the above scenarios are considered committing a terrorist act against the United States of America. The Bill also includes easing deportation standards for undocumented people suspected of "terrorism", expanding the federal wiretap powers, and enabling authorities to crack down on domestic fund raising by organizations suspected of ties to "terrorist" groups. Although the dictionary has a definition of the word "terrorism," it seems that in this legislation it has been left up to the discretionary power of the government.. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), "rejects the notion that the government should be given additional power to define terrorism so broadly as to risk selective prosecution based on political beliefs."

A brief history lesson for the people: After World War II, in the early 50's, McCarthyism was in full effect. If anyone accused you of being a communist, you would be questioned and could be thrown in jail, regardless of proof. No questions asked. This system has been brought back, new and improved for the 90's; Criminologist David B. Kopel's testimony before the Senate Judiciary committee stated "...the Clinton Terrorism bill defines almost all violent and property crimes(does this include grafitti?), no matter how trivial, as terrorist offenses."

Any of ya'll got some of your peeps locked up? Have you heard of political prisoners like Mumia Abu Jamal? Check this out. We are now stripped of our Constitutional rights. Habeas Corpus, called the most important human rights provision in the Constitution, has been eliminated. Habeas Corpus allows a state prisoner to challenge his or her imprisonment in the Federal courts. Under the new provisions, the Federal court cannot question state court rulings that apply to the Federal Constitution, and also are prevented from hearing factual evidence not heard in the trial, but necessary in deciding whether the Constitution was violated. Both of these provisions violate the Constitution, including a violation of "due process". The independent review of state criminal judgments by the Federal Courts has existed since the nation's founding, beginning with the "Writ of Error", later to be renamed in 1867 by "Writ of Habeas Corpus." The removal of Habeas Corpus destroys the only shield which protected innocent people from being wrongly incarcerated, due to abusive, unreliable, racist, or simply mistaken laws and procedures. Catherine Burton, a cousin of Julie Welsh who was killed in the Oklahoma City bombing, recently stated at a press conference against the anti-terrorism legislation that Habeas Corpus is, "... to make sure innocent people are not wrongly convicted...innocent people will be dying or spending their lives wrongly incarcerated." Who does this new legislation affect the most? Well, according to Officer Montes of the New York City Department of Corrections, our prison population is made up of 92% people of color, the largest groups being African-American at 57%, and Latino at 35%. So now you know who this bill is aimed at. According to Stephen P. Halbrook, Ph.D. "The bill is granting the States the ultimate unchecked power: the power to convict, incarcerate and even execute Americans, without the right of meaningful post-conviction review."

The Big Brother Bill doesn't stop there. Now the Justice Department has the power to use secret evidence to deprive a person of liberty by arguing deportation cases in a sealed, secret court. "The bill would permit the government to deport aliens based on evidence kept secret from the alien, in violation of the right of due process." The ACLU brought to light that this classified information could also be used to deport both permanent residents and non-immigrants. This means that you can get kicked out of the United States without having the right to know why. Remember the COINTLEPRO back in the 60's, who caused the shoot-out between the U.S. and the Black Panther Party at UCLA, who set plants in the Young Lords Party, who bombed a house full of families and children in Philly? Understand that when the FBI, CIA and other state police try to destroy an individual or group deemed "threatening" they use infiltration tactics that in the past were illegal, but now are legal according to this Bill. No terrorist group in the United States has yet matched the acts of terror committed by our very own government. Check your History books.

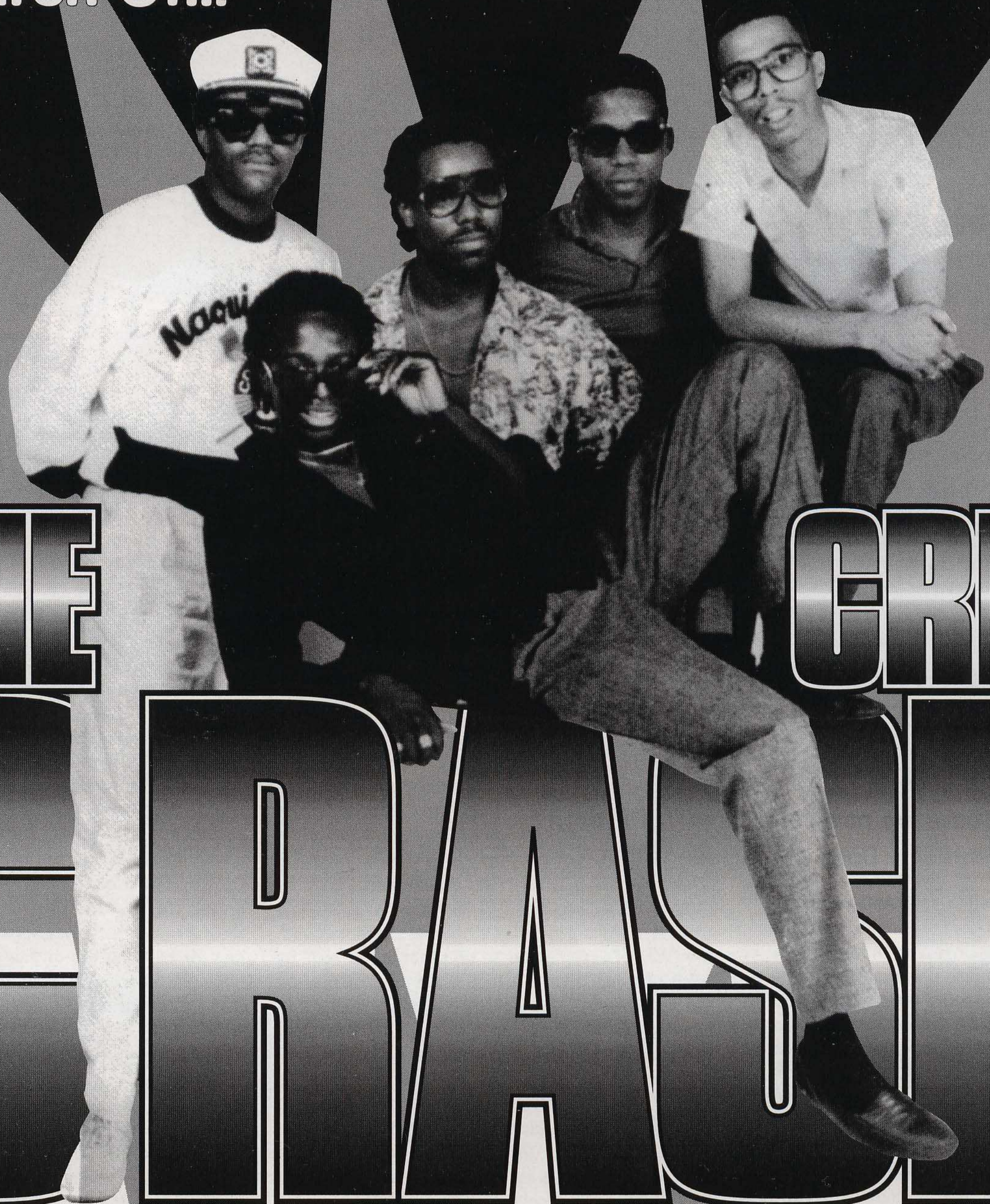
According the ACLU the FBI now has a " green light to investigate even in the absence of facts giving rise to a reasonable indication of criminality." How often do urban youth get checked by the police just for hanging out on the corner? How is this going to effect grassroots political organizations fighting for our rights? We are being shut down on every level. This is another violation of our rights, as protected in the First Amendment.

Another provision in the Anti-Terrorist Bill (yes, this is a long-ass Bill!) requires banks to freeze all assets of any individual or organization who the bank believes is an agent of a foreign terrorist organization. This means if you have money in the bank, and they think you are a "terrorist", they will put your money on LOCK-DOWN! Remember that both the word "foreign" and "terrorist" are left undefined. Further note that because of an earlier section of the Bill, no proof is necessary. No provision of the Bill tells a bank how to determine whether an individual or group is an agent. Worse, if a bank "becomes aware", (left undefined), that someone is suspected of being a terrorist and it does not freeze their assets, the bank will be fined $50,000, or twice the amount of the assets, whichever is greater.

It is time to realize that we are moving towards a new kind of nation. Rising trends of Republican domination, the end to welfare for poor children and families, and now secret courts, deportation, and increased wire tapping are evidence that we have been forced into the next millennium. The Anti-Terrorist Bill should have us asking questions-who's the terrorist, and who is being terrorized?

by J-Love

In Search Of...



THE CRASH CREW

When I hear Hip-Hop heads reminiscing of the early days of rap, a time that's affectionately now known as the "old school". A time when it was about straight lyricism and a time when you rapped for the fun of it, respect and the girls, girls, girls I do adore. A time when lyrics of partying and good times were created to escape the realism of the inner city street instead of perpertrating hardcore images of selling drugs and killing sprees for record sales. When I hear heads speak of this era, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, The Treacherous Three, Afrika Bambatta and the Mighty Zulu Nation, Whodini, as well as the Funky 4 + 1 more The Fearless Four and the Legendary Cold Crush Brothers are among the names I've kept reading and hearing about. Even as DJ's spin old school on the radio, clubs and mixtapes, for some reason many forget about the five bad brothers who look out for one another and turn parties out. MCs E.K. Mike C, La Shubee, Reggie Reg, The Mellow Gee M and DJ Darryl C, the brothers of Poison Clan, who were better, and professionally, known as the Crash Crew.

So I got up with my brother from another mother Dave, and we went on a trek to find the most lyrical Hip Hop heroes who didn't want to be left behind, all they wanted to do was blow ya mind, one more time, duh, duh, duh, duh... We drove uptown searching high and low until we heard the Harmony. We turned off the stereo and followed the sound. Going the wrong way up one way streets, through red lights trying to catch the sound of the breaking bells, then all of a sudden after following the flava in our ears, like the vapors that Tucan Sam caught, we came across a small shop on 145th st. owned by E.K. Mike C. Dave searched for a legal parking spot while I hopped out to make the introduction Ive been waiting a lifetime to make. Dave parked and joined us shortly as I'm counting 2,3,4, . . . Yo someones missing. Shit, where's the Mellow Gee Man? Expecting to hear the worst I was pleasantly surprised to hear that he was in class. Yeah that's right, you heard me, the brothers who was one of the first MCs to sing on wax was still at John Jay where he is currently persuing a law degree.

WITNESSED BY AJ "SPIZOCK" WOODSON

As I got over the inital thrill of being in the presence of the force of the 5 MC's, I remembered, I came here with a mission. The lyrics 'We are known as MC's, we always aim to please' are now ringing in my ears my ears as I begin to discuss the differences of now and then when it comes to the mic and the pen. "We said the rhymes to scoop the girls", Shubee (the most talkative of the crew) quickly spits out. He continues, "Thats what it was all about, we was young and it was fun. Now its all about the dollar." The rest of the crew and their manager Yoda agree in unison. We discussed how almost all Manhattan MCs, the Fearless 4, The Treachous 3, Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde, Lovebug Starski, Kurtis Blow, The Magnificent 7 and the Crash Crew, just to name a few, all went to Charles Evans Hughes High School. How they used to battle in the hallways and represent in the lunchroom. How every crew had sweatshirts with the crew and MC name on it. And if you didn't rock the party over the weekend you couldn't wear your shit to school because everyone would dis ya. It was all for respect, there were no checks, it was a pride thing. I remembered how hearing groups like the Crash Crew, the Cold Crush, and others made me start writing rhymes and pick up a mic and I wondered who the Crash Crew saw or heard that made them wanna grace the M.I.C. Once again Schubee, quick to draw with an answer like a seasoned gunfighter with his six shooters in the wild west, "We went to this party at Benjamin Franklin on 116 st. and saw 5 brothers with trench coats, echo chambers and a beatbox. It was Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Four MC's. "Flash is on the beatbox goin'." Everyone in the room sings and reminices, "From that day I knew I wanted to be an MC." Seeing the puzzled look on my face he replies, "Yeah Rahiem wasn't originally down , he was with the Funky Four + 1 More, so it was just the Furious 4." Reggie Reg quickly agrees, letting me know that the event had a similar effect on him, "Their shit was tight."

Having personally been a victim of a notorious rap label back in the day, 'B-Boy records', I couldn't help wanting to shift the conversation and get all the dirt on Sugarhill Records which, as well as Enjoy Records was run by the robbing cops, I mean the Robinson's, Sylvia and Bobby. They had the master Gee of the Sugarhill Gang come in the office and stare at a suitcase of money saying, "Yo sign this and this is what ya gonna be having". When I heard that, I had visions of Eazy E and Jerry Heller in the Dre Day video. Reggie Reg recalls, "It was a year and a half after they orignally approached us. We turned them down and put out our own record, *High Powered Rap*. Then our producing team didn't wanna branch out any further, we seen Ms. Robinson again and she said to come by the office and we'll talk. We went and negotiated a little deal and it was a horror story ever since."

The first time the crew went to pick up their royalty checks it was during Christmas time, and they were very dissapointed. Reg remembers 'We were so depressed we walked home. We had a little change, but it was the beginning of the horror story. Sylvia would tell the group she had God with her and that Jesus loved them. "Jesus loves us and she robbed us blind!" shouts Schubee. "Everyone who was on Sugarhill went through the same problems." Flash took her to court and sued her for his money. Moe Dee and Treacherous, and the Fearless broke up. Everyone connected to the Hill had to leave."

The group said it was great in the beginning, or so they thought. They were 16,17, and 18 - young, dumb and ripe for the Robbingsons, I mean Robinson's picking. They all spoke on how Sugarhill was a great studio, they had great engineers and musicans. The Crash Crew brought a record in, the musicans listened and played it. The group wrote the routine and rhymes and recorded the song in the same day. Mr. Robinson told the group, "You are my sons, take all the time you need." They were in the studio for almost 24 hours rapping and having fun, not knowing that the meter was running until royalty time came. "The record went gold but we never saw gold, all we saw were scraps." says Schubee matter of factly.

I asked each member what their favorite cut was and they responded in harmony, "On theRadio". Now, keeping it real, me and Dave like a hip hop Johnny Cochran and F. Lee Bailey had to bring up that it was the Fantasy 3's jam 'It's Your Rock' the crew took in the studio and came out with the classic "On the Radio'. They took the beat, and the melody. The Fantasy 3 answered with "Biters in the City". Now being that this was a time of battling and respect, I approached the bench and asked about the battle. The crew realizing they were under oath came clean. They never actually battled, but one night the Fantasy 3 was on stage talking shit, not knowing that the Crash Crew was in the house and they caught a bad one reminding me of the one PM Dawn caught from KRS years later. Reggie Reg looking back on the situation now says, "We were definitely in the wrong, we took that shit," he continues to say, "That was the only violence we ever really had with any crew through." Reg was also quick to point out that they never lost a battle.

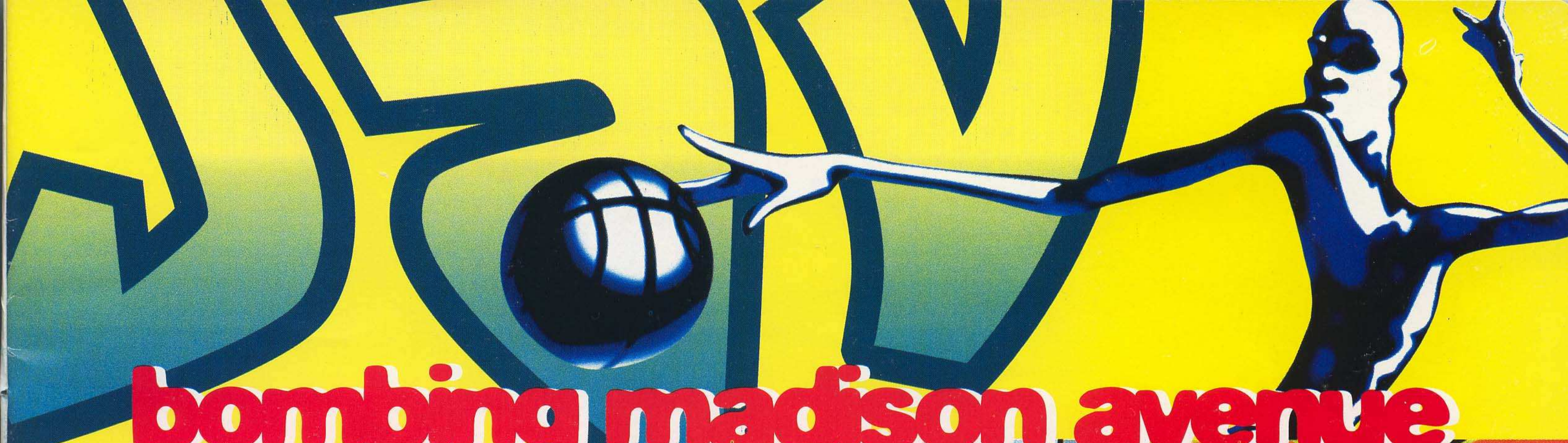
I asked the crew out of the groups out now who could they ever see doin one of their joints and freakin' it. Schubee awnsered, "Wu-Tang doin' 'Breakin' Bells'. They come with that same energy". The ironic thing about that answer is that the Crash Crew used to be called The Poison Clan, a name they got from a Kung Fu flick called 'The Deadly Venoms'. Years later Wu rocks that kung fu scenario and flips it.

So what's the crew up to these days? I mentioned that Gee Man goes to John Jay and Mike C owns the store were chillin in. The crew as a whole are in the studio and doin' a few shows in the N.Y. area. They also manage and produce a group Death Blow from Brooklyn. On that note my tape ends and my tape recorder feels at least five pounds heavier.

The crew says their gonna be working on their stage show and tightening loose ends, then shop for a deal. I hear a few labels are awaiting the final result.

Can the Crash Crew come back and get theirs in the make money, mack mania, kill or be killed, blunted 'til I die, pimping, necklace stripping, bullet hole dripping, era of hip hop? Only time will tell. As for me and my man Dave, we must ride off into the moonlight in search of other Hip-Hop Heroes and lyrical egends, so until our next adventure into the rapsploitation era, STAY FROSTY!

...used to be called The Poison Clan, a name they got from a Kung Fu flick called 'The Deadly Venoms'. Years later Wu rocks that kung fu scenario and flipped it.



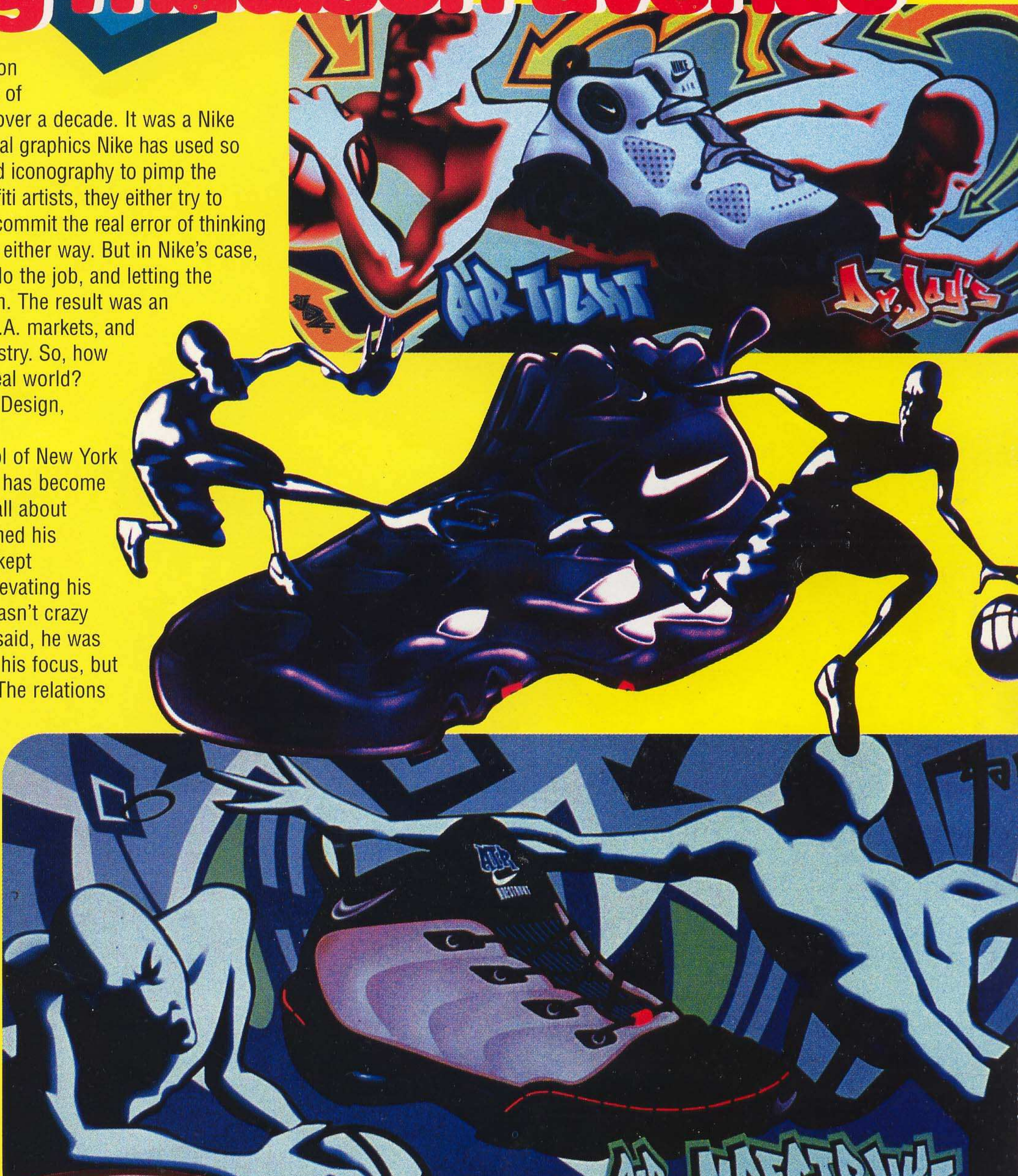
bombing madison avenue

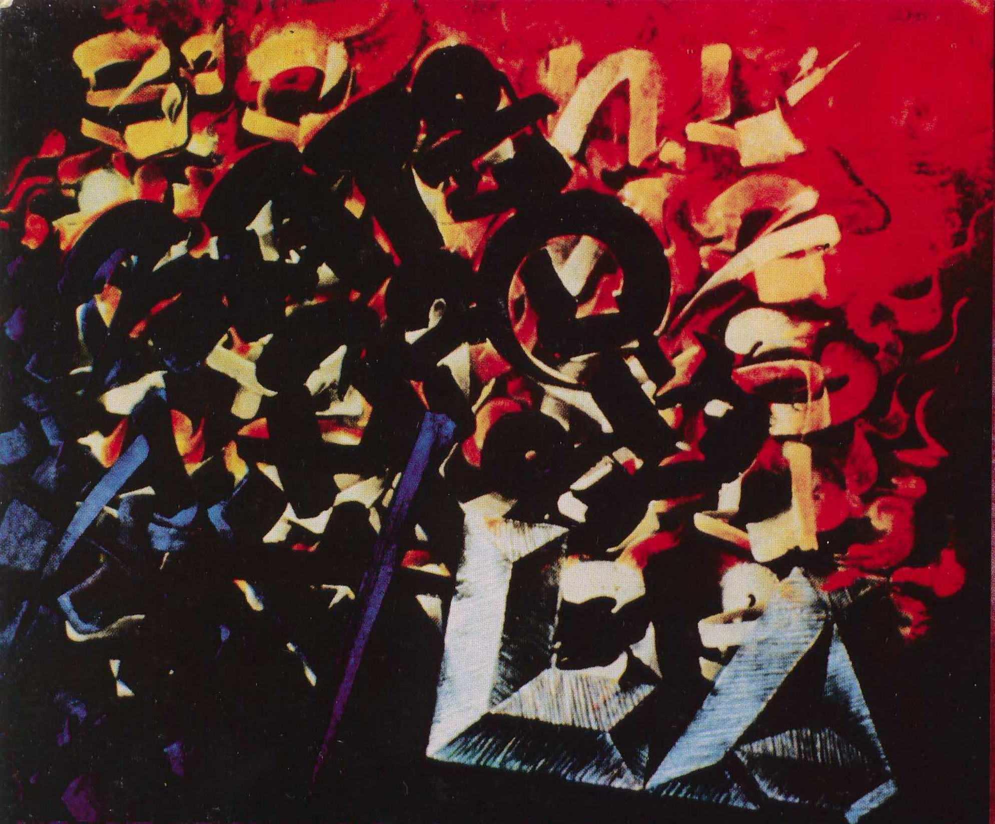
One day in August of 1994, while rolling in a car on my way to Far Rockaway, Queens, I saw a piece of graffiti that shocked me in a way that I haven't felt in over a decade. It was a Nike billboard, advertising a sneaker, but instead of the usual graphics Nike has used so effectively over the years, they used graffiti lettering and iconography to pimp the product. So what? Well, when art directors call on graffiti artists, they either try to mold the graffiti to fit their own narrow vision, or they commit the real error of thinking they can fake it on their own, and the campaign suffers either way. But in Nike's case, they showed a tremendous faith in letting the graffiti do the job, and letting the graffitist, in this case Jav, set the tone of the campaign. The result was an innovative series of ads that blew up in the N.Y. and L.A. markets, and put Jav on the fast track to having real juice in the industry. So, how does a graffiti writing scumball get on the ball in the real world? By using the 3D's that most vandals don't; Discipline, Design, and Determination.

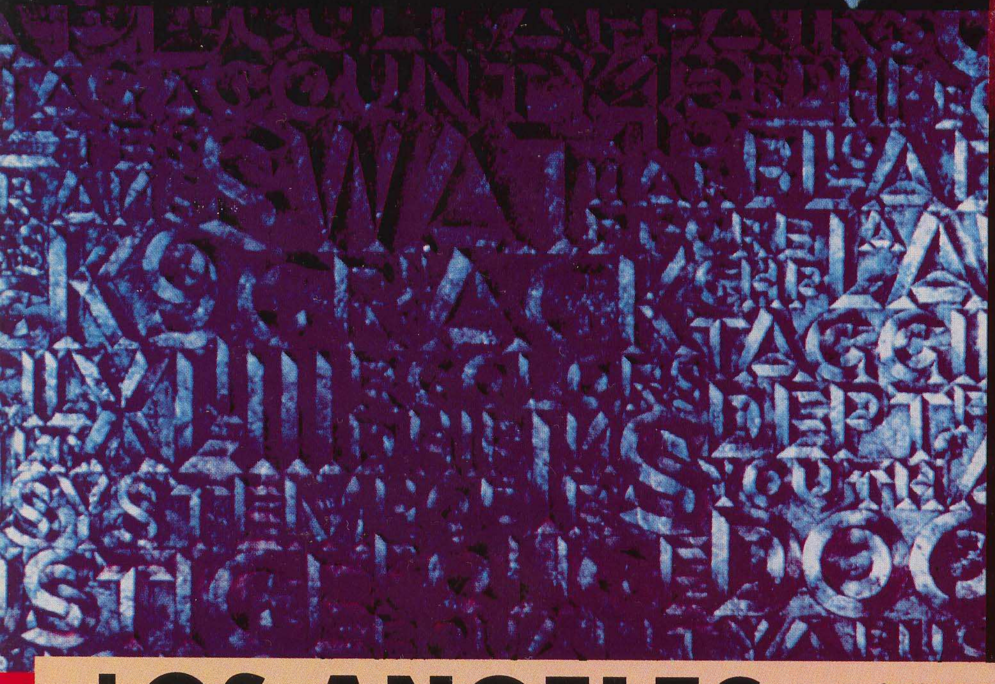
Jav is a student of the early-to-mid-eighties school of New York Graff. He went to Music and Art, the high school that has become internationally known as the "Fame" school. He was all about being a writer until the mid-eighties beef fests dampened his appetite for going all-city. Still, he kept at it in books, kept a close eye on West and his FC comrades, and kept elevating his style after getting into Cooper Union. Cooper Union wasn't crazy about Jav sticking close to his graffiti styles, but as I said, he was determined to do his thing. He originally couldn't find his focus, but once he got into graphic design, he had come home. The relations between formal typography and graffiti are very close, but the fascination for Jav was where they differed; "In Graphic Design, it's all about white space, areas on a document where your eye can rest, so you can fully concentrate on the information present. In graffiti there's none of that, it's all KABOOOM!" So the graffiti-turned-graphics wiz found his style; Bold lines and room to breathe.

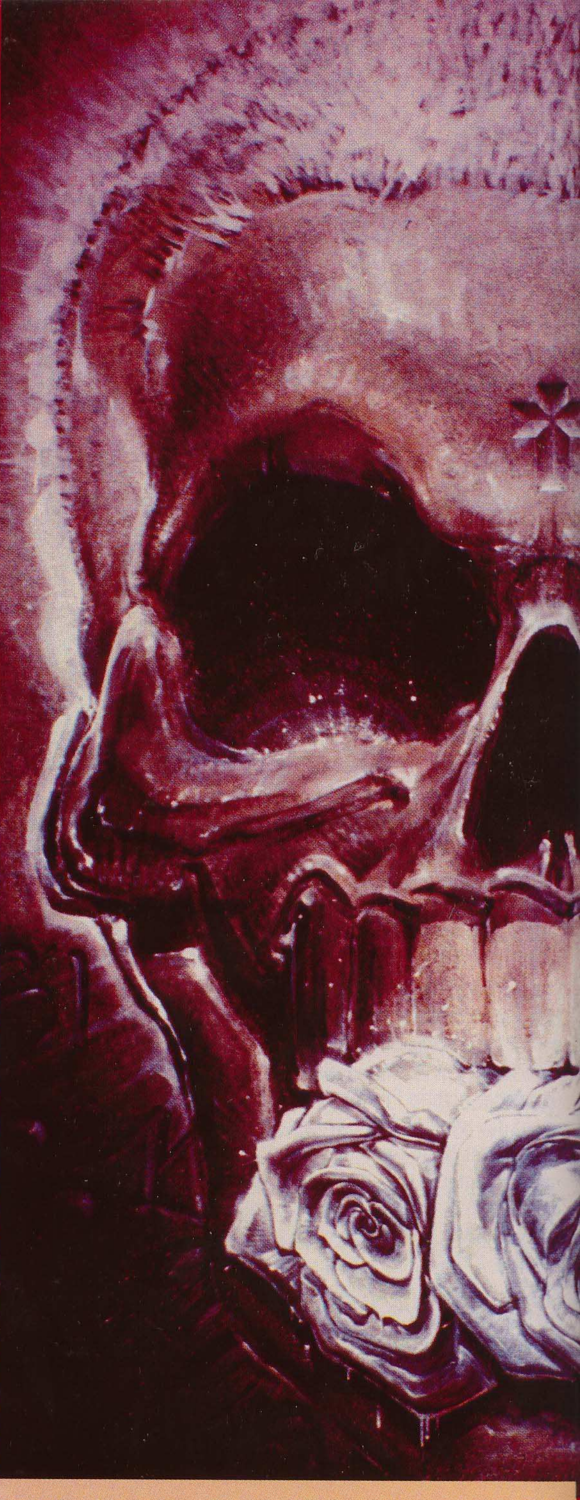
Even though Jav is bombing corporate America, you may catch him getting down with West and others from time to time. It's cool to watch his graff influence his design, but when you see how his design informs his graffiti, it's truly dope. That's the horizon broadening experience graff needs more of. The lesson here is, take graffiti wherever you can, just make sure you bring some of the world back into graff. Jav is looking to make the big payback on a wall near you soon. Watch for it.

-Espoet









LOS ANGELES CHOLO STYLE GRAFFITI ART

BY CHAZ BOJORQUEZ

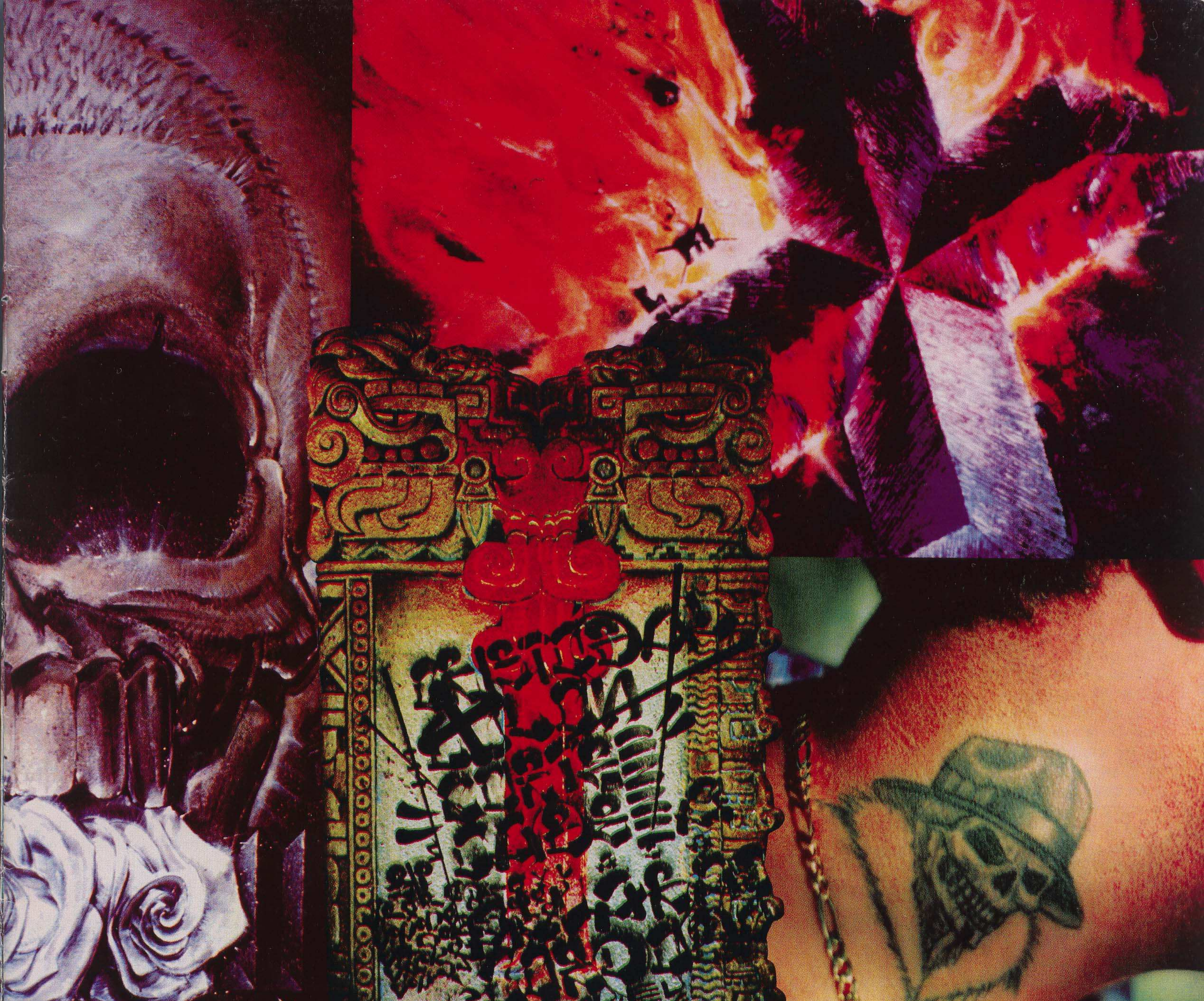
My bond with graffiti has been long and committed. I did not seek to do graffiti, but in reality it confronted, and demanded me to make some understanding of it. It asked of me, "What is graffiti?, What the hell does all this mean?", and most important, "Why do I need to do this?!"

The graffiti that I started with in 1969 was our own West-Coast *Cholo* style graffiti, and it's still the same style of graffiti that I paint today, 27 years later. I say paint, because I almost always use a brush. The brush was the weapon-of-choice before spray cans were introduced in the early 1950's in Los Angeles.

Our history and age of *Cholo* Latino gang style have been documented in the book, Los Angeles Barrio Calligraphy by Jerry and Sally Romotsky (Dawson's Book Shop, 1976). They interviewed a sixty year-old plumber who stated that graffiti was, "in full bloom" when he started as a teenager. Roughly, we can date the beginning to the mid-1930's. Beatrice Griffith refers vaguely to graffiti in American Me (published in 1948). I believe, and have heard stories that the practice goes back further than the 1930's, to the early part of the century with the shoeshine boys marking their names on the walls with their daubers.

The most important and influential time comes from the early 1940's. Here in Los Angeles, the Latino Zootsuiters were defining their Americanism. The zooters were formed by forces like non-acceptance by the Anglo-Americans, mass deportations of Mexican-American citizens back to Mexico, and in Los Angeles, the beatings by U.S. servicemen during World War 2. New York Harlem black zooters, and of course, Jazz and Swing music also had a big influence. Los Angeles zoot suiters felt and wanted to be different. With their hair done in big pompadours, and 'draped' in tailor-made suits they were swinging to their own styles. They spoke 'Calō', their own language, a cool jive of half-English, half-Spanish rhythms. The term applied to the slang the gypsies and bullfighters of Mexico and Spain used at the time. Here the 'Old School Cholo' L.A. graffiti style still has it's most direct influence. Out of this experience came lowrider cars and culture, clothes, music, tag-names, and again, it's own language.

Los Angeles graffiti has it's own visual presentation. It's called a public announcement. L.A. gang graffiti writings are called 'Placas' (Plaques, symbols of territorial street boundaries), and are pledges of allegiance to your neighborhood. It's letter face has always been called 'Old English' and is always printed in upper-case capital letters. This squarish, prestigious typeface was meant to present to the public a formal document, encouraging gang strength, and creating an



aura of exclusivity.

The Placa is written in a contemporary high advertising format, with a headline, body copy and a logo. These three major building blocks of corporate public advertising can also describe the type layout from ancient Sumerian clay tablets to the Constitution of the United States. The headline states the gang or street name, the copy is the roll call list of everyone's gang name, and the logo refers to the person who wrote it by adding his tag at the end. Placas are written with care to make them straight and clean. They are flushed left and right, or words are stacked and centered. Rarely are they ever done in lower-case script, or other than in black letters, one of the many differences from NY style. This tradition of type, names, and language rarely deviates and is handed down from generation to generation.

The Los Angeles walls are an unofficial history of the Mexican-American presence in the streets of East LA. This traditional form of Los Angeles graffiti is a graffiti seeking **RESPECT** (something all graffiti has in common). They are markings by generations of rebellious youth announcing their strength to all outsiders. I feel that by writing your name, it makes you exist, how you write makes you strong, and by writing on the wall, it makes you immortal. It is graffiti by the neighborhood, for the neighborhood. That's another difference between Cholo and Hip hop. In Cholo, usually one writer writes for the whole gang, and only writes within their territory. In Hip-Hop graffiti styles there is an individual focus, where 'getting up' all-city or all-state with your tag is more important. Generally speaking, the typeface of Hip Hop tags changes to a more personalized upper and lower case free-script.

Our lowriders, oldies music and old school graffiti styles in Los Angeles have been getting a new revival in the last few years. Cholo graffiti is still strong and is a big influence on the L.A. Hip-Hop writing crews. I see many young writers today still use some forms of the Cholo style in their work. The large, black Old English letters, highly abstracted and carefully designed, reveal strength and control. Besides just looking at the surface, this is an image that demands to be read and understood. These inscriptions achieve incredibly sophisticated aesthetic heights and disclose the concerns of the neighborhood.

My personal involvement with graffiti started in the late 1960's, but art has been a part of my entire life. I had spent a summer in art school in Guadalajara, Mexico and started to attend art classes at Chouinard Art Institute (now Cal Arts) the year before I graduated from high school. I had always seen and understood graffiti, even in grammar school in the 1950's, but it wasn't until I was out of high school in 1967 that I became truly aware what graffiti was all about and also the current international art movements. Minimalism, Pop, and Early Conceptual assemblage was in. I hated it! I felt the gallery art market was thin and shallow. Too much head and not enough heart. I turned away from the painting / gallery / money scene for fifteen years. I needed to find my own voice in art that described my existence, and what was important to my generation, not mentally formulated solutions. I wanted in-your-face art.

Cholo graffiti's inner meanings had not been thought of as art. No one thought that graffiti was art, as some still believe today. They said that graffiti was, "A socio-economic response to a repressed portion of our society." No one really looked at it for it's sheer beauty of control. When done well, it would glow with pride. I could feel that spirit, like all of us do. I went for the graffiti. I felt that in art, the absolute perfection of a line is a greater awareness of truth, and graffiti was Word! Also, it is said that a person's inner character can be read by their handwriting. In graffiti, so can a group's character and attitude can be identified by their writings. This very essence that letters, words , and symbols could be my building blocks to build my character and define my desperate, rebellious need to express myself. Graffiti spoke to me at this time and said that these writings are more than threatening words of defiance, but a path, a spirit of choice, a true voyage of belonging, a voyage seeking self-esteem.

By the end of 1969, I had created a symbol that represented me and my streets. It was the skull. Written Cholo letters turned into an image. Señor Suerte (Mr. Luck), with a Super Fly hat, and a fur collared long coat, a skull with fingers crossed and a Dr. Sardonicus smile. To the Latino people, a skull's representation is not about death, but about rebirth. A tradition from our Aztec heritage, these images are still manifested in our Latino festivals today. My skull is the gangster image of protection from death. Here in our local neighborhood, the old homeboy street gang, The Avenues, has claimed the Skull as their own. Many have the Skull tattooed on their body, from the top of their skull, to the sides of their neck, arms, chest and full backs (Check out the movie *American Me*). The Skull has become a lowrider gang icon. You have to earn it to have it tattooed.

I was not a gang member, but in my neighborhood of Northeast L.A., you live with the gang style next door your entire life. I still do. I took up stencilling my Skull/tag and writing roll call names in the streets all through the 1970's, until I stopped in 1986. With three friends, Brian Jones spray painting running bulls, Tom Ruddick with his colorful long dragon symbol and Leo Mcintire with the Aztec symbol of Guetzalcoatl, we tagged all summer in 1970. They all stopped that year, but I kept on. Later, I would go tagging with a friend or with my girlfriend, Blades, but at times I would go to the riverbed myself. There were no crews then,only gangs.

Another strong influence here in Los Angeles is the attraction of the Pacific Rim Philosophies. Graffiti script demonstrates the Oriental work ethic of one hour of preparation for one minute of execution.

Some of Japan's most famous war generals were poets. Before the battle, they would write their feeling through their calligraphy by writing a poem of solemn beauty or righteous strength. I took a class in Oriental calligraphy at the Pasadena Pacific Asia Museum under Yum Chung Chiang, himself a student of Mr Pu Jou, brother of the last emperor of China.I needed a better understanding of line to better understand the Calligraphy of graffiti.

In 1975, in collaboration with a photographer, Gusamo Cesaretti, I wrote a book called *The Street Writers*, (Acrobat Books). In this small photo book of L.A. Graffiti I described the street and attitude of graffiti writing.

There were many stories coming out of New York about Taki, Dondi, Futura, Lee, Lady Pink, Seen and more. We heard about the Fun Gallery and finally the blocking of the train yards with dogs and razor wire. But New York was so far away. There were no influences here until the 1980's. In my mind the early New York style was about 'identity', while here in L.A. it was about defining 'territory'. My own work was about finding the soul of graffiti.

I started to shift from the streets to my first graffiti canvas painting in 1978. I needed to have longer conversations with the image. The streets were not giving me enough time to draw what I wanted to say. I needed months on one painting. You see, the image is the teacher. It says you draw, and how you draw, describes your life. For example do I need straightening? Do I need more definition? Keep to the subject! Do I need more light on my thoughts and ideas? Do I need to be clearer in my mental vision?" These are some of the questions solved by doing canvas graffiti.

A major change in life happened when Blades and I travelled around the world for three years, Visiting 35 countries. I looked at customs, art and tattoos in the South Pacific, Asia and Europe. I came back having found a more common understanding to all languages and writings. We returned in 1980 and I was determined to do more graffiti art. I had also worked on many movie and product agencies as my day job. I had the opportunity to design more movie styles: *The Warriors*, *Boulevard Nights*, *Turk 183*, *Cavemen*, *The Cheap Detective*, and parts from *Star Wars* to *The Muppets*. I have painted backgrounds for commercials and designed logos, for Reebok, Arco, Album Covers, rock bands and line illustrations of stereos, food, tractors, anything and everything. I designed and built commercial art for fifteen years until 1986. That experience made me understand the true nature and sheer power of mass advertising. Talk about "getting up" !

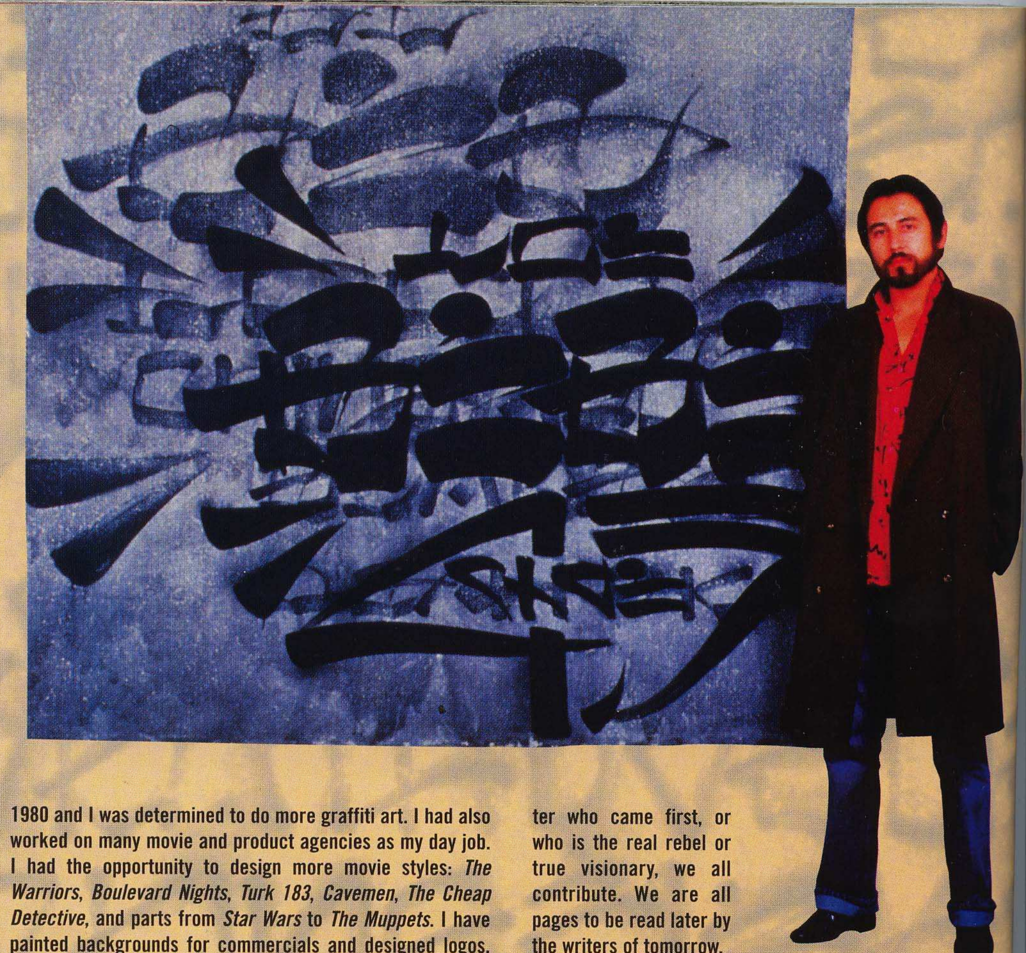
Many issues that we dislike about advertising are the same issues we dislike about graffiti. Issues like who 'violates' or 'owns' the public space? Who has the 'right' to speak or place billboards in your face? EVERYONE does their own form of graffiti.

The real war against graffiti is all about materialism, and materialism is politics. Any dialogue about Graffiti that does not talk about the image is not politics. I've been on many panels and spoken to many groups. Nothing changes with the opposition. Your arguing a lose-lose situation. We as artists, writers and taggers should only concern ourselves with the image, not arguing the politics of graffiti.

You are only remembered and respected by your image, not what you say, or if your'e black, brown or white, male or female, young or old. The strength of your work must be able to speak and endure. The best known writers are our best artists, and many writers are graduating from major art schools. What will the graffiti for the end of the millennium look like? I can't say, but it will be more exiting and better than today, because I believe graffiti cannot stay the same. Even we can't stop it!

In my own work, I take "Old School" further and further. Making images that not only speak, but can bite! I believe taggers, bombers, and piecers should take their styles and absolute limits! Then do it again. But some would say that "it's not real graffiti !". There will always be another generation or core group to write about the old traditional graffiti styles. I am speaking to the artist in all of us, to the leadership of the movement. We must all think about improving! That's the future of graffiti.

What is real graffiti? Piecers, bombers, canvas graffiti? To me, it's all graffiti. Any drawn line that speaks about identity, dignity and unity, that line is art. Graffiti art is a like a wide spectrum of different kinds of styles, each no better than the other. I don't like elitism in my life, and I don't like it in my art. I see the whole movement as a big book. It doesn't matter who came first, or who is the real rebel or true visionary, we all contribute. We are all pages to be read later by the writers of tomorrow.



I feel that if the city was a body, graffiti would tell us where it hurts. By cutting out the pain, you risk damage to the whole. No one part is more important than another. This is an example of what I think about New York style and Cholo style. Ninety eight percent of the graffiti that we know today, the graffiti that circled the entire world is Hip-Hop style, straight out of New York since the 1970's. I give my respects. I think that the oldest graffiti in the United States, here since the 1930's or earlier, is from East Los Angeles. The lowrider culture is still going strong here and still has an influence on L.A. Hip- Hop graffiti.

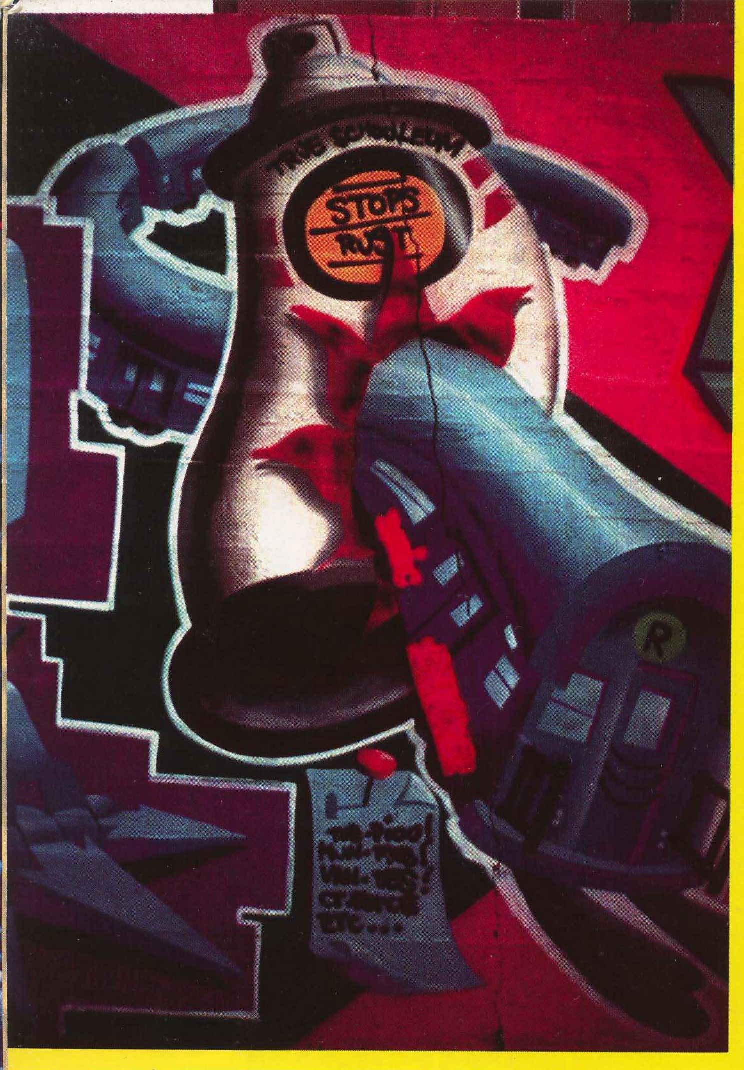
Even though the Cholo and New York styles look different, the purpose and intent are still the same. We all have the same mother, rebellion. Just a different father, style. We are all the children of bastardized language, and we have more in common than we have differences.

In the last five years I have been written up nationally and internationally, from television to magazine interviews. I have shown my artwork in local underground events to art galleries to museums. My work is collected by Hollywood stars, respected art collectors, and major art museums, including the Smithsonian Institute.

My current street observations are that Los Angeles may be on the verge of being a dynamic city of the future. It is becoming a world leader on all art matters. Our future influence is yet to be known. We have our own unique history of Pop Culture. Our homegrown arts are our best, west coast art, lowbrow cartoon art and Hollywood entertainment industry all come together. We are the crossroads where graffiti art meets internet and cyber-pop. Some examples of my work can be found on the internet with New Brow Art at http://www.newbrowart. com/

In L.A. we live in a movie world where the outcome can be written in the future we want. No other city in the world has this cultural art heritage. Los Angeles could become the future graffiti capital of the world and that would be a spark for all arts everywhere to shine. Because once you understand and appreciate graffiti art, then we can all understand and appreciate one another.

– Copyright 1996. Chaz Bojoqurez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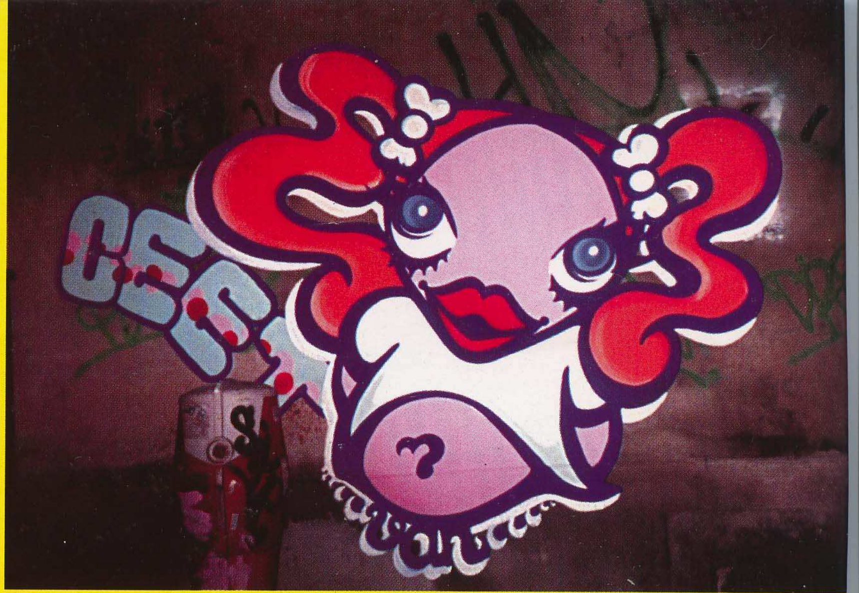

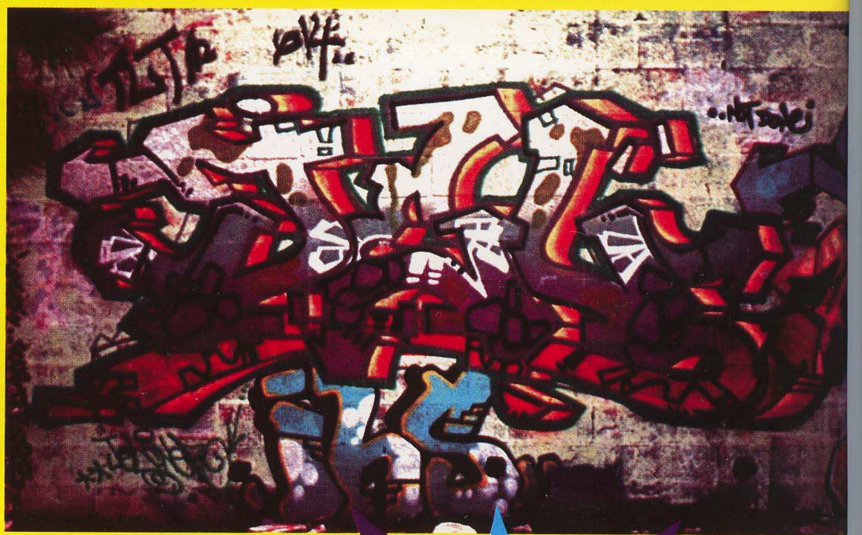

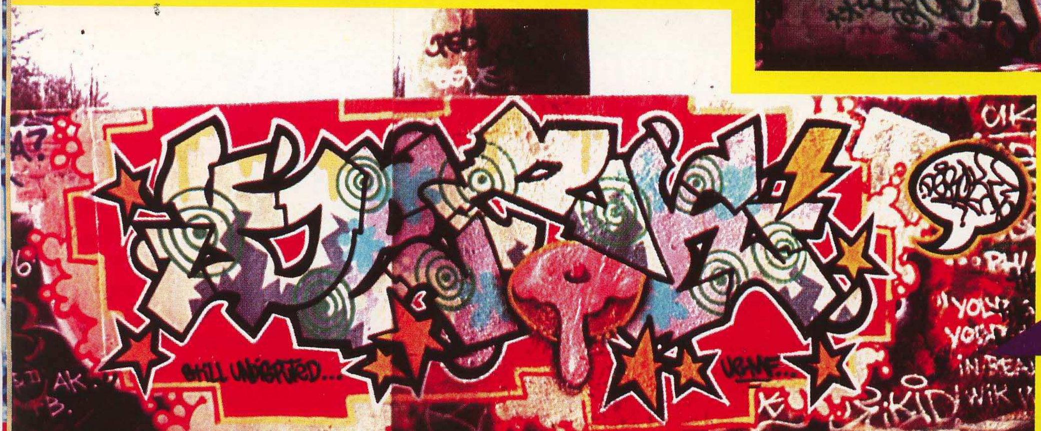
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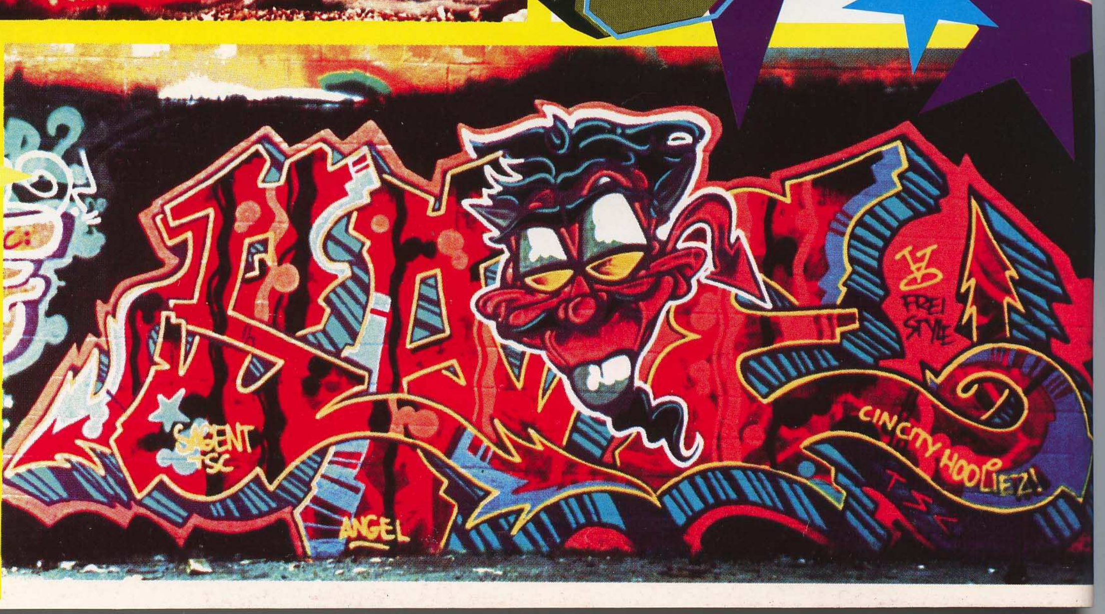
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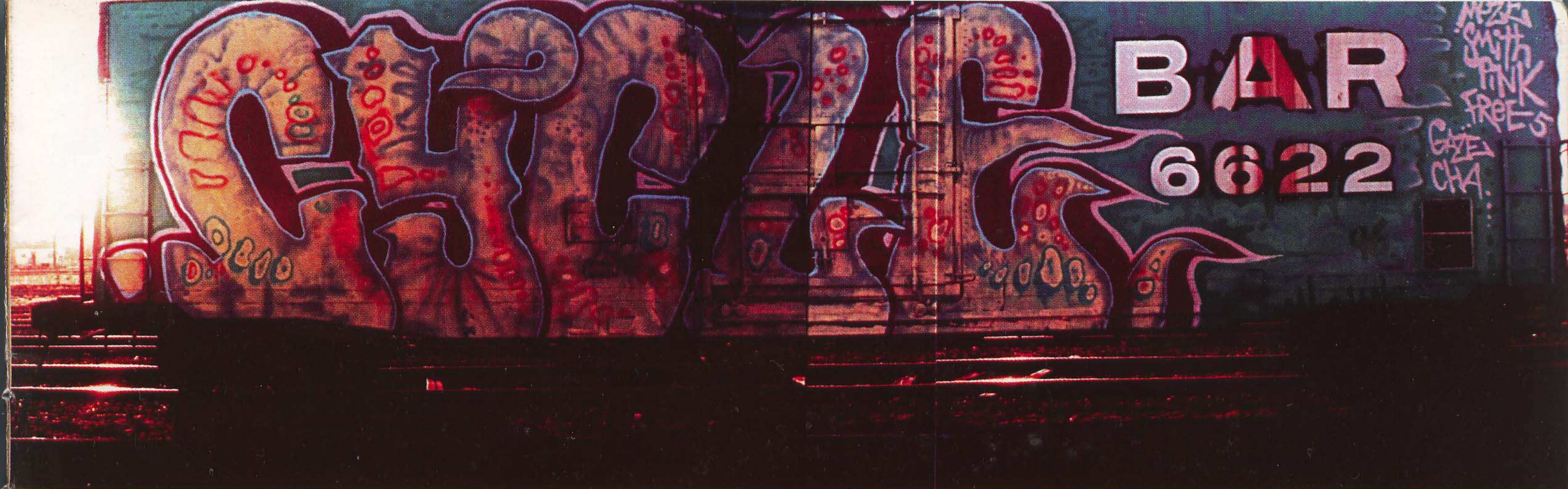

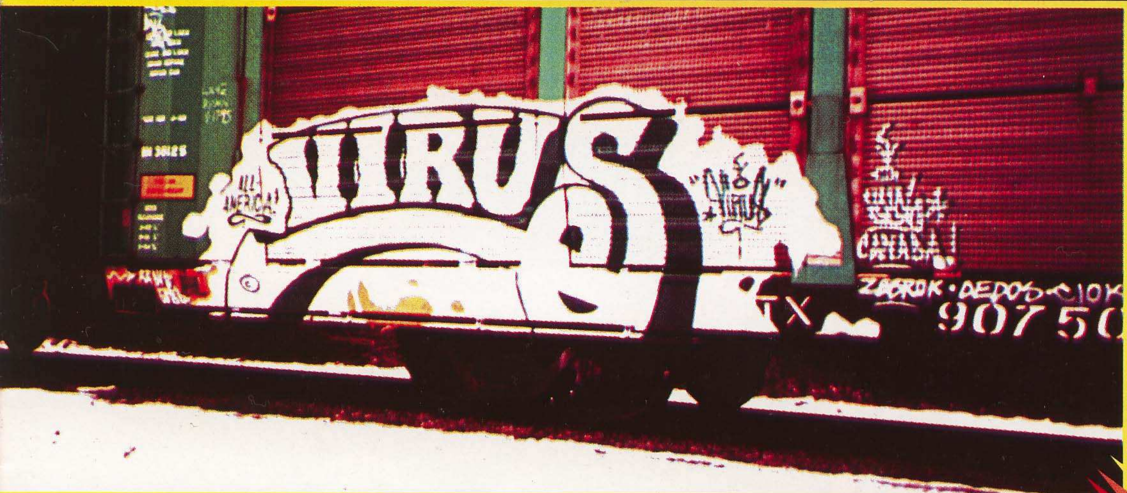

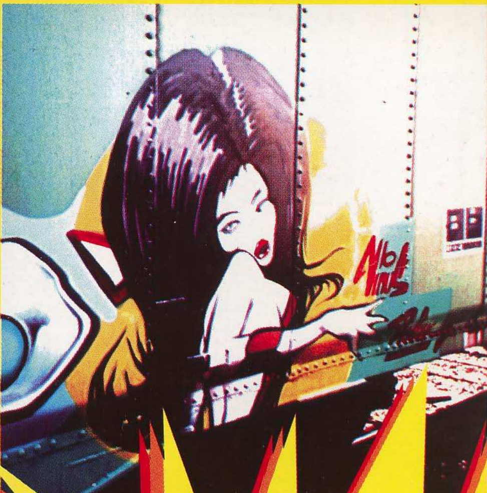

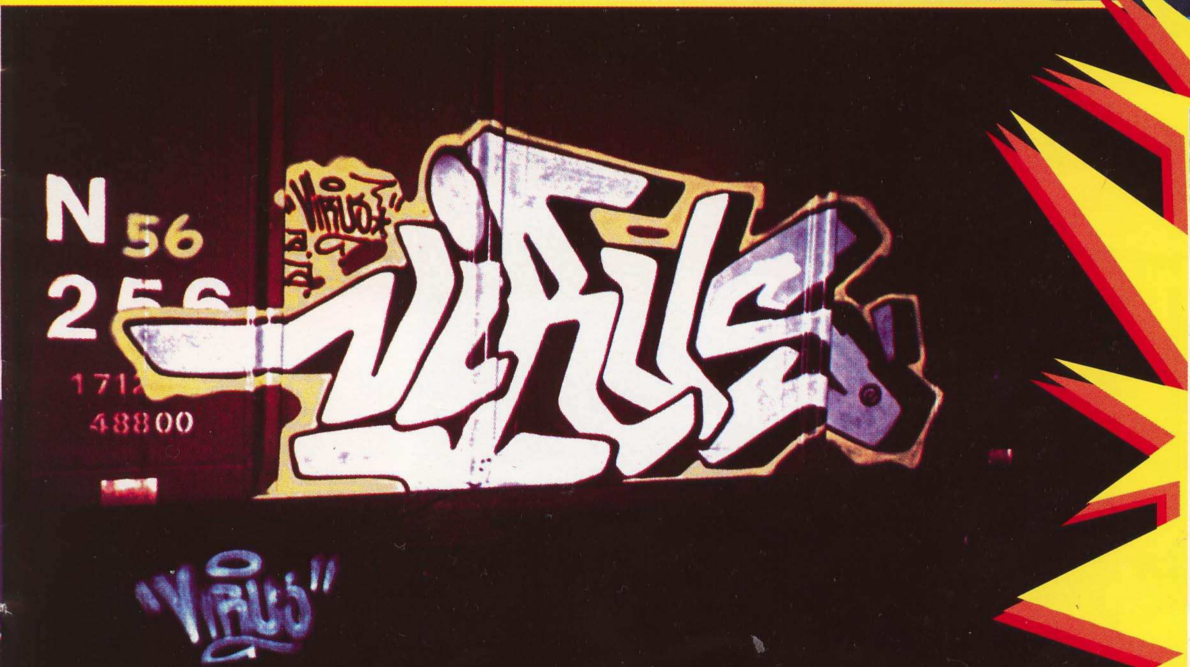

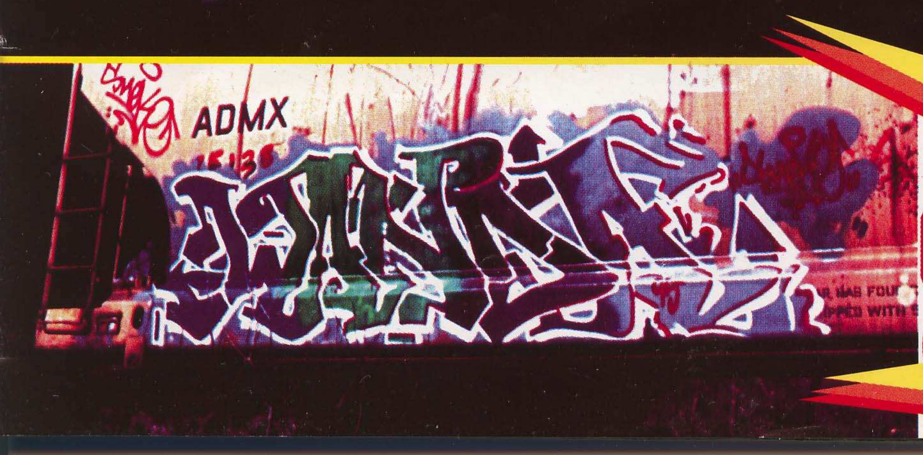

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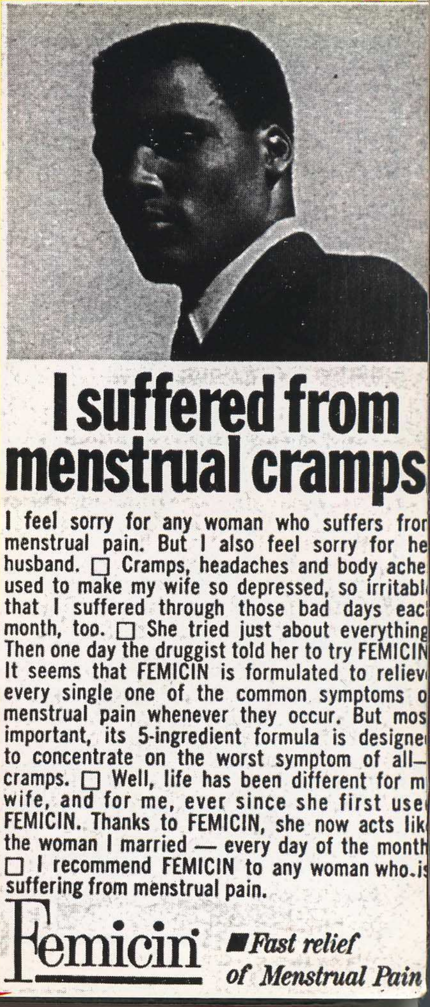

I suffered from menstrual cramps

I feel sorry for any woman who suffers fro menstrual pain. But I also feel sorry for he husband. ☐ Cramps, headaches and body ache used to make my wife so depressed, so irritabl that I suffered through those bad days eac month, too. ☐ She tried just about everything Then one day the druggist told her to try FEMICIN It seems that FEMICIN is formulated to reliev every single one of the common symptoms o menstrual pain whenever they occur. But mos important, its 5-ingredient formula is designe to concentrate on the worst symptom of all— cramps. ☐ Well, life has been different for m wife, and for me, ever since she first use FEMICIN. Thanks to FEMICIN, she now acts lik the woman I married — every day of the month ☐ I recommend FEMICIN to any woman who is suffering from menstrual pain.

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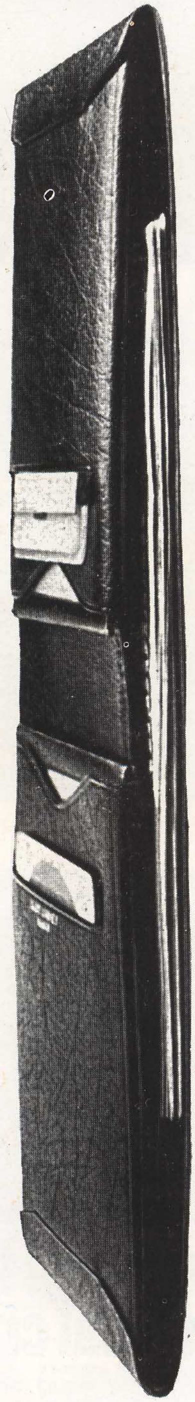

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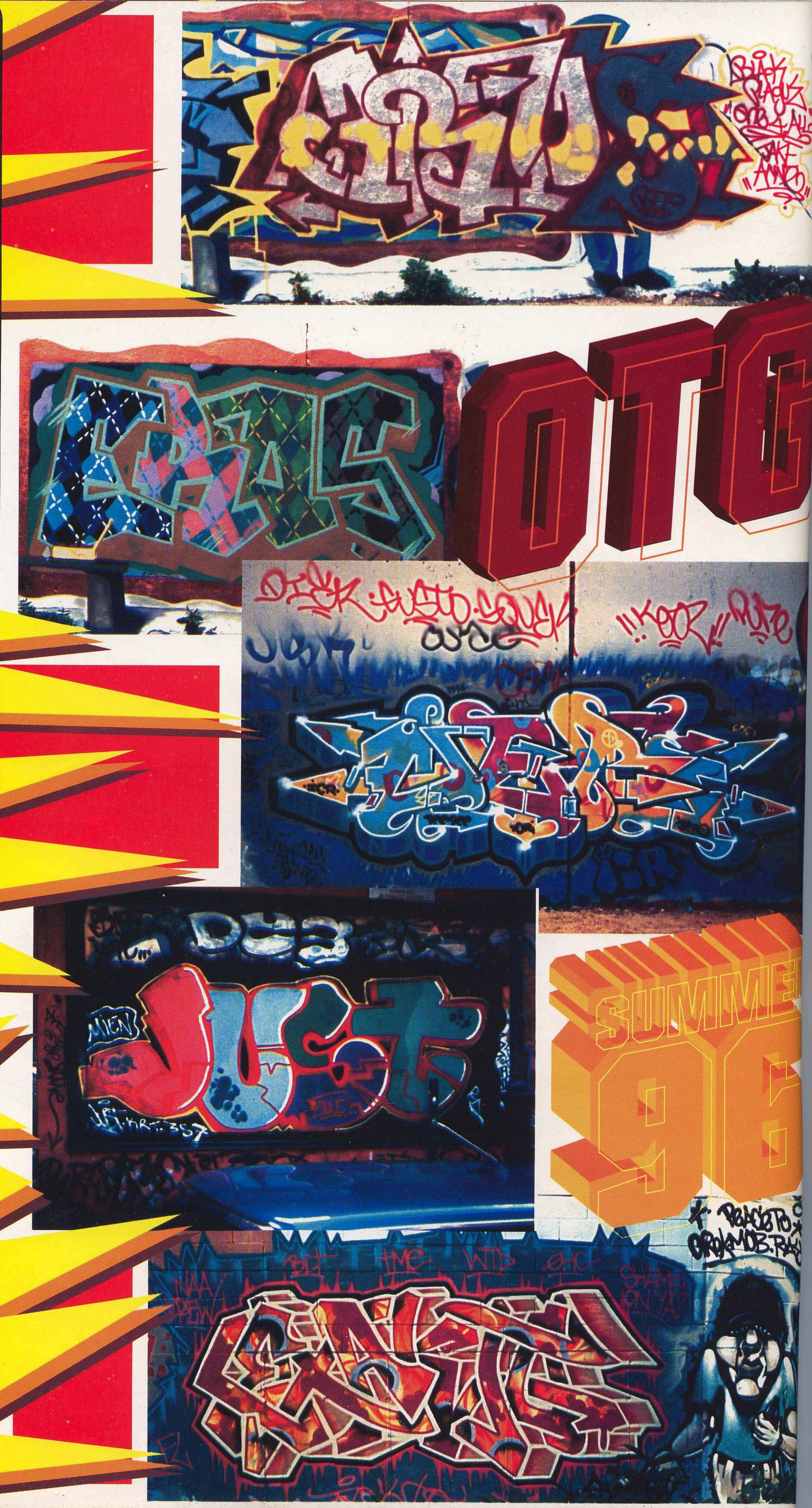

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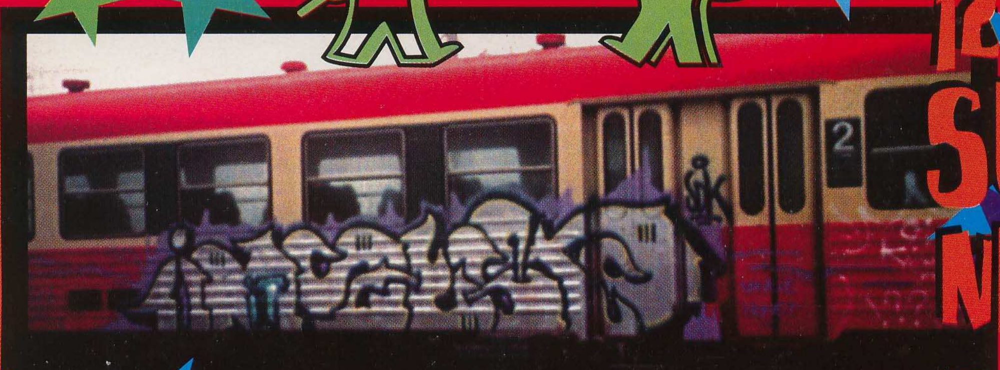

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How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love The Tommy Boy Marketing Department

By Dave Thompkins.

Los Angeles, Late March. There had been a pre-publicity emission, and I'm frothing over a third generation dub of the fourth album from the first group to put the D-i-v-i-Styyyleriiide and the Jungle Brothers on the same spot. 99's in the adjacent room on the phone with, presumably, somebody. About her; She MC, once skateboarded into a capacity MIT auditorium and lectured on Coltrane over live percussion. Somewhere between my third and fourth rewind of "Stakes is High", 9 is explaining to somebody how we heard something, because we had this something, from somewhere. Her voice is then drowned by, "The facts are getting sicker, even sicker perhaps / I stick a bush to make a bundle to escape this synapse." The synapse is the slow motioned shred of time it took her roommate to dive across the room - like Kato from "Pink Panther Strikes Again" - to turn down my blaring moment. Somebody connected the lines, for it was Pos on my phone, pissed about the leak of unmastered material that had crossed the mainstreams. 99 was enlisting his assistance on her upcoming album on Grand Royal, while her Red Alert memories - in yet another phone call - were enlisted for the collage of "Criminal Minded" retrospects that comprise the De La album intro.

May: "Every MC is a teacher, regardless if they wanna be one or not. With KRS-ONE, I'd have to quote the whole Criminal Minded album. One quote or song would be disrespecting him. Brothers say they only rhyme about what they know. Within that quote, I only rhyme about what I know, meaning I always try to learn more and know more. That's why I try to bring more." It's still a pissed Pos, It's still another call. Actually, Plugs One through Three are weary and wary. It's 8:30 pm, and they've been batting around the same press day questions like, "Why did you change the style? Sonofabezerk!" since 11:00 am. Sill, the question remained, "We made it as literal as possible. The shit's in plain English." Dove dovetails the dialogue; "Everything's as clear as day / realistically explicit in the things I say."

Pos: "A lot of listeners are simple minded. We're taking into consideration that certain ways we bring lyrics may go over some brothers' heads. We're moving - in a sense - to how society is moving, how earth moving. As people get less and less into understanding things, we're not gonna let you use that for an excuse. We have cuts with our own lingo, but you're not used to hearing us come straightforward."

In '93, the Buhlooned media Ballyhoo was,"Fuck being hard, Posdnous is complicated." Yet, "I Am I Be" solemnly made the hardest of granite sniffle, and skip smooth stones off the sandy shore like they were in "Beaches". With "Stakes is High", the quotable is "Stakes Is High." Meaning that one can't breathe De La without mentioning The Verse- - how Dove is sick of everything. How "Native Tongues have been officially reinstated." How "Smiling in public is against the law / 'Cause love don't get you through life no more / It's who you know and 'How you son?' and 'How you gettin' in?'/ And 'Who the man holdin' heat?'/ Yo, and 'How was the skins?'/ And 'How high?'/ 'Yo what up, hop? I heard you caught a body'/ Seem like every man and woman share the life of John Gotti / But that ain't organized, mixing crimes with life enzymes." That cut is the compendium--no interviews or any of this scribble is necessary, just read the lines.

Dove on industrial-weakened personalities and products: "In order to be cool, enjoy life and be somebody--you've got to be in the music business. It's so sad that you can't escape it. I can't go to a club and everybody is coming up to me trying to be a writer, a production supervisor or something. It's not about lovin' life, being happy and enjoying. It's about being a rapper and being in the entertainment business. everybody wants to be exclusive; what's sad is that it's not because EVERYBODY'S in it. Your cousin's mother's aunt. Everyone is so spoiled; no one comes to check out a show. No one supports the artists. Stakes have been spoiled. It's so tired. talent, art, and intelligence are no longer concerns."

And "R&B--non-rappin' bullshit?" Maceo, what goes on? "Kids coming up today -- they didn't know BDP. They hear Total's record and and think it's an original. It's wack. They can't sing, so they needed a beat to get over with." Pos, "Wonce Again": "UNDERGROUND MEANS NOT BEING EXPOSED, SO YOU BETTER TAKE YOUR NAKED ASS AND PUT ON SOME CLOTHES" Then, Yogurt-Spelled-Backwards off the top rope, "It's lazy. You're taking a masterpiece and trying to make it your own." : "If you know D'Angelo just came out with a single and it sounds like you can throw a hip-hop beat over it...then you're cool in rap. You're too cool to be a fan."

Hip Hop artists are fans? From the soul comes appreciation for its elements of composition. "Sunshine's" hook is patterned to Mantronix' "Fresh is the Word", "Wonce Again" is fearlessly "Rockin' It", and "Down Syndrome" reverBERATES "Sucker MCs, you sad-faced clown." "Ego Trippin' (Part Two)" verbally spliced lyric influences. Pos: "Just hearing Kool Keith and Ultramagnetic reinstated the assurance that the way we were trying to write our rhymes. It helped Dave and I understand that we can come like that." Explaining Kool Keith to the younger generation of Rap Music Fans may traumatize impressionable, delicate minds. And where do you start with De La? Start with now. On "Big Brother Beat", Dove is "Giving you memos from these demos from back in '89 / giving you all encounters of an unknown kind."

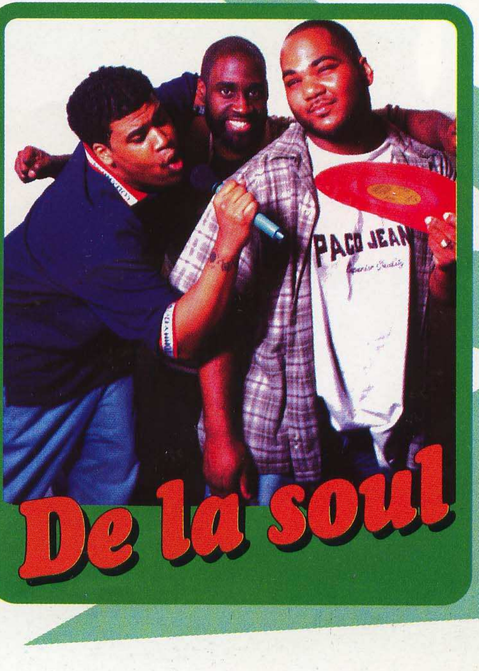
MEMO
TO: The Know Not Kind
RE: The Unknown Kind

ENCOUNTER SAMPLES:
Definition, Prince Paul: "The dict-dict-dictionary / is very / necessary."
Buddy: new Native Tonguespeak
Milie: child abuse, incest
I Be Blowin': "yeah, thanks Mace"
Clear Lake: I'm glad I have a baby girl.

From the Keep It Right Department,
Plugs 1 thru 3

cc/h.e.r.

Understandably, Pos : "It's cool if you wanna make a kid wanna know what Hip Hop is. But, it's sad 'cause we're really introducing ourselves to that generation. At the time of "Buhloone Mindstate", a lot of people needed to be re-introduced to us . It's weird to predict. Are they gonna get exactly what we're talking about or are we gonna add fans to our base? A lot of brothers had to stand outside and look in. You were looking at it and wanted to be down, because you'd never seen that language before." For the novice, "meany, meany, bitties and stikabush" are residual in "Stakes"-- subliminal inductions of De La past.



Intuitively en focus, Pos connects the time framing the head, "True Hip Hop heads can be listening to a song for years and be like, damn, I never realized he said that."

Paragraph precedent: What endures as timeless is how the line structure of "D.A.I.S.Y. Age" (1989) parallels Tribe Called Quest's "Wordplay" (1996). An example of the molecular beads on the microphone cord that mentally connect the Tongues. Hip Hoppers who've been down with the J. Beez and Q-Tip since "The Promo" wanna know what's up with the Native Tongue reinstatement of what we had lost among ourselves in years that have gone by. We are friends and plan on being business partners in the near future. Our concentration is to see a better future for ourselves in this career."

Early March. For a moment there was an L.I.R. trainwreck at the House of Blues De La show. Despite an audio fuckup, the Mommies of all invention-- that being mic control-- gave birth to the Soul Children, and one Dove silenced the dead air: "I cherish the twilight, and maximize my soul to be the right size." Then Common rebuked the guys in the Westside meatlocker, as somebody had no Bizness ballin' through the East without microphone skills. In which Common "bones h.e.r." In which Dove's engine to his comprehension is too complex," and Pos "deems that you're not even a man/ so, I don't deem it mandatory taking your pride." "The Bizness" is telling -- with this album, De La Soul is not killing itself to reinvent itself. They'd rather "give it to ya' 24-7 on the microphone."

"Plug One's translating the zone": "It's time to sit down and think and plot out some words. If you're supposedly in this for real, then you have time to write some rhymes. We're not up front in people's minds as really dope MCs compared to KRS, Kool G. Rap.. A lot of brothers have a really dope flow but beyond the incredible way they put the cadences in the wording. For me, I had to sit down, read it on paper, and be blown away. A lot of brothers are focusing on certain elements of knowledge and what they're given and see in their normal life. They relate through using symbols. It comes to a point where you have to realize that the listeners-- the masses who buy-- appreciate the music more than the lyrics. It's on me to put it into a form of wordplay that'll be pleasant to your ear." The P.A. Mace-- who's been known to break down his own mic audibles-- complains, "It's all guns, and some smoke. Bumpin' some girl. It's good to recognize it, acknowledge it, and speak on it. There's a lot of stuff we don't agree with that sounds good. Some of it is put together really well. It's just when you dig deeper-- how many times are you gonna beat me upside the head with that shit? If you're gonna rhyme about the same shit in every song, then go back to the old days: do a 12 minute record and go home."

That's 12 narrow-minded minutes of "claps and gats that make the whole sick world collapse." But, being that time is money, "Stakes Is High" tells more about Hip Hop in 4.5 minutes than other albums could feebly imagine.

89's "Freedom of Speak" posed the rhetorical question: "Tell me what's more neglected / teaching our seed the fact there's greed / or words that's said on a record."

And "Stakes Is High" embodies the conundrum for the '96 state: "Niggas 'no doubt' better than the know they daughter and they sons."

While everybody carps about the difference in De La Soul, the words on a record-- teaching "I told you so"-- have been present all the time. I think you betta' listen. OTG!

MAY 15, 1996: TRAMPS (NYC)...LATE EVENING

Take them shell toes off

Although the matching windbreakers that they stormed on stage with have been abandoned, Pos and Dove, standing in semi-crouch in front of DJ Mase, evoke an image of Run DMC; two amazing MC stylists and a DJ cutting live behind them. As the De La show begins to wind to a conclusion, I realize this is one of the most entertaining hip-hop shows I have ever seen; up there with Kris, Doug, those Fugee kids...

Hold up, hold up! Easy! This is this the same De La you're referring to, that I've seen lackadaisically stroll through their live show?...that my man saw sleepwalk on stage in Philly?...that seemed quite absent of energy on their entire west coast tour?..Yeah, that was a few years ago but... c'mon I deserve a little explanatory context.

A very small piece of context

MAY 15, 1996: TRAMPS... EARLIER THAT EVENING

A blur of red and white freezes in a cartoonish heroic pose as Busta Rhymes and his color coordinated cohorts threaten to rip floorboards through sheer lyrical texture. At the back of Tramps nightclub a gathering of Native Tongues has occurred...there's Pos, Baby Bam, is that Mike G? ...Trugoy... Their focus is on stage. Is it possible that the Soul has only just now realized their daunting task? It's tough to follow an opening act who has a hit record out. It's probably a waste of time to follow an artist with THE hit joint on the airwaves, dancefloors and trunk systems. And it's damn near suicide to try to top an artist **'who-haas'** all that plus the energy and presence of a rampaging rhino.

Pos seems to be enjoying the Busta show but is he staring like a deer caught in the headlights...? Or is he just digesting the butterflies in his stomach?

He can see the crowd enjoying the show as much as he is, but he's got to know they're waiting for the return of De La Soul.

Stakes is high. Pressures is higher.

And, for those of us that always wanted the De La live - show to match the brilliance of their records, hopes is highest.

But maybe I'm mistaken about Posdnous' steely concentration...maybe he's digging the hype Busta is creating 'cause he knows the Soul is gonna heat it even more. Maybe they've come to change the minds of those that threw critical jabs at their live shows. De La Soul seems ready to stomach any gut punch... **fuck the butterflies....**

Don't call it a comeback

Mase dedicates the show to hip-hop fans; this is not an industry party. Posdnous and Trugoy the Dove hit the stage runnin'. **'We are here/ to tell the world/ just who we are...'** Shocking the crowd, De La Soul instantly inspire 'an old school throwdown' entering with that classic chant and sporting matching windbreakers. They quickly hit switches by flowing into a Salt-n-Pepa paraphrase **'My mic sounds nice...'** Plug one and two settle into the track that introed them to the world...

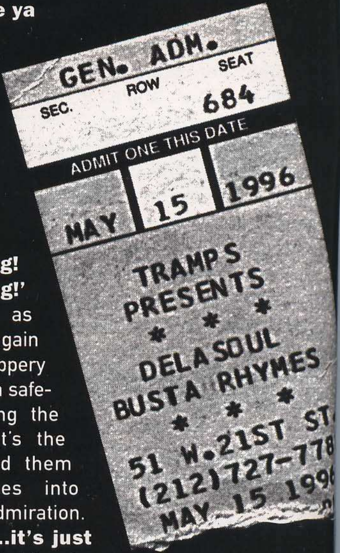
I recall the muttered intro to "Plug Tunin" **'...somethin's wrong here...'** ...and I realize that those words initiated De La's career-long critique of the music they love. As their debut album was strategically designed to align them with the great innovators and rule breakers of the past it was mistaken by mass audiences as a rejection of hip-hop history. Tonight,barely five minutes into their set, it's obvious that the builders and destroyers of the D.A.I.S.Y.-Age are ready to proudly display their roots.

Trugoy finishes his verse in the affected bass delivery of an old school MC. With the crowd properly seasoned the Soul is ready to serve up a new recipe for Fat Ass Show.

Perhaps the most famous classic in all the world of music

Plugs One and Two and the Mighty Most Def chant on time **'We're gonna take ya way back in the century/we're gonna take ya way back in the century'** as Maseo unpacks eight bars of "Nautilus". We spiral into crates of history as Mase digs and drops live. "Latoya"... Back to Bob James for eight. **'We're gonna take ya way back...'** "Check Out My Melody"... "Nautilus". My guess is that Mase is creating the set on the fly, like a true DJ; Pos and Dove are playing 'Name That Break' along with the rest of us. It's a rare moment when a DJ selects live for a group in concert and, credit to his old school transcripts, Mase cuts it clean for the whole show (alright there was one skip). ..that's that Boogie Down Productions joint , aw man, what's the name of it? Back to... "Nautilus"..

'We're gonna take ya way back....'



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SEC. ROW SEAT 684
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DELA SOUL
BUSTA RHYMES
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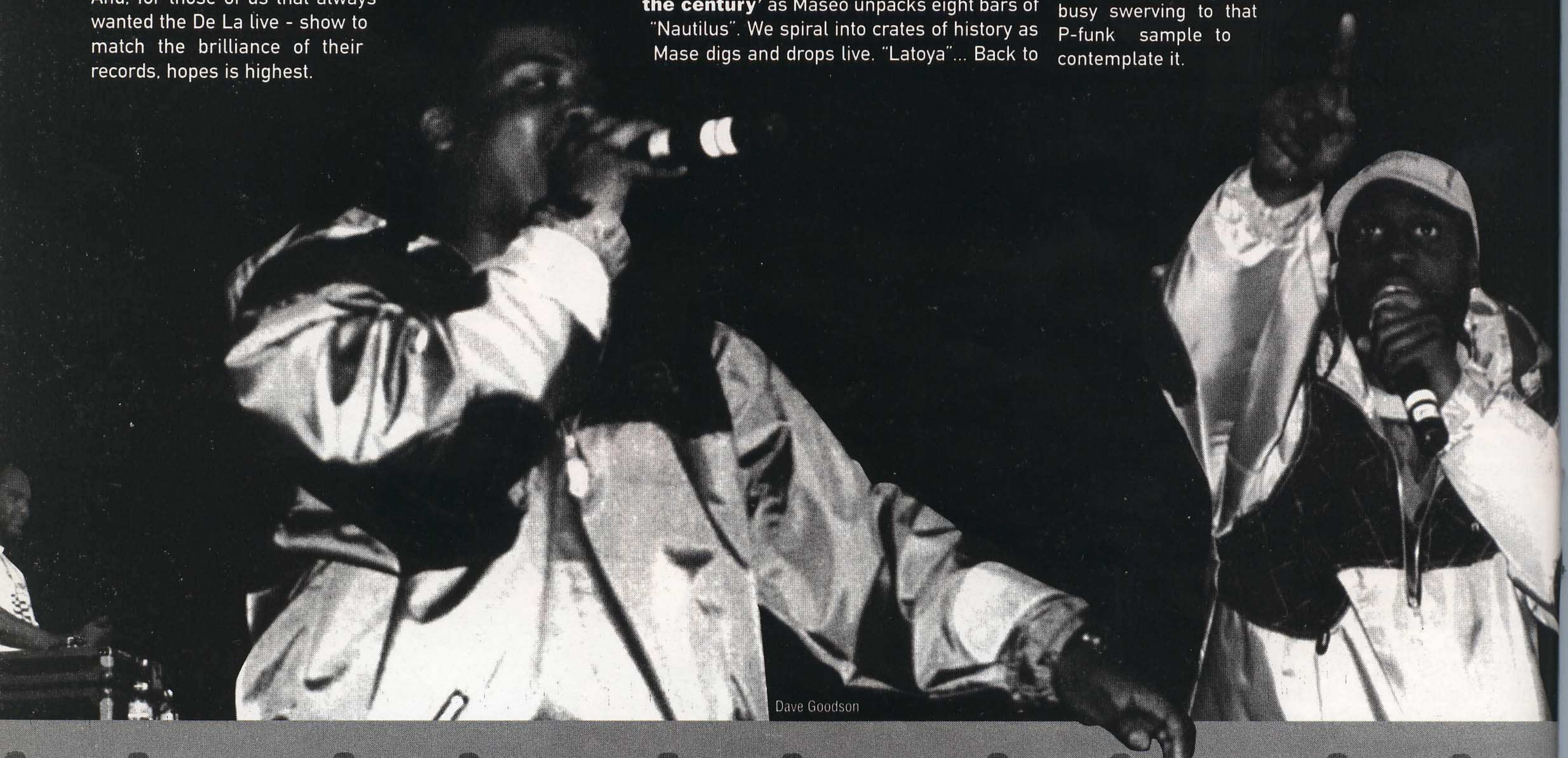
When it comes to being de la it's just...

'We hate this song! We hate this song!' declares the Soul, as the crowd tries to gain footing on this slippery intro. De La tosses a safety line by revealing the song they hate. It's the track that bumped them from L.I. potholes into trenches of pop admiration. Pos replaces the **'...it's just me, myself and I.'** of the chorus with **'...that's why we hate this song.'** Rejection of the track within the track itself could have post-mod philosophers analyzing hip-hop's relation to 'popularity' for days. Would De La Soul have the freedom to put out whatever tracks they want without their certified crossover successes? Can they really hate a song that every fan cherishes as hip-hop history? I was too busy swerving to that P-funk sample to contemplate it.



Dave Goodson

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soul soul soul soul sou

Callin' her a crab is just a figure of speech

BK representative and guest MC, Mighty Most Def points over heads at the stage edge; indicates to Trugoy that she's in the house. Dove and Def launch into a reworking of "Roxanne, Roxanne", replacing the Kangol and Ice obsession with the recurring De La jawn, Jennifa **('Yo, Trugoy!'/'Yeah what's up, Def?'/ 'There go that girl...')**. Mase conjures the classic instrumental. Posdnous aligns himself with the Educated Rapper by proceeding to have every line in his verse rhyme with **'Felix Unger'**.

MERCY... MERCY...

Brass tones signal the screams and **"Ego Trippin"** begins. **'AAAAH!/AAAAH!/AAAAH!...'** The audience screams along and hits the paraphrases as brilliantly woven together by the Soul. This song could be the symbol for the whole show (and possibly De La's whole mission) as it simultaneously embraces hip-hops complexity and history but backslaps its cliches. Again, lyrics are remixed live and Mighty Most Def gets off the best shot as he replaces an anticipated rejoinder. Dove kicks **'I'm the foot/but who's steppin'?'**. Def rejoins to the "Ain't No Half Steppin" rhythm. : **'Big... Daddy... Kane... record.'** It was an unnecessary flourish on an already bomb cut, but the obvious joy of live performance makes this hip-hop show exponentially better than most. De La have studied well and the Mighty Most looks like a damn natural.

Interluden to my do re mi

I reminisce on seeing Los Bros Jungle bring a young whipper-snapper on stage with them when they were promoting "I'll House You". That kid was named Q-tip and I can only wait to see if MC MMD can make moves as deftly as the Abstract.

Soul by the pound

The Plug Trio plus one Mighty Most start a sing-song... **'Comin'...comin'....'** Nah. Wait a sec...I recognize those chords and that cadence ...oh shit they're sayin' **'Common... Common!'** And on cue, the Chi-town reppa bounds on stage as the crowd braces itself for that lazy funk beat of the latest De La single, "The Bizness". But what?... Com upends shit and slashes into his critique of one natural born killa (formerly With Attitude). His comsensical rhymes drop molotov punchlines designed to melt ice cubes. This track had burned it's way into my world only days earlier on someone's mix set. Tonight, minus radio edits, the chorus **('I see the bitch in you!')** allows Common to reignite the Chicago fire in the middle of Oshea stadium. Heads throw hands in the air as if to instigate **'The roof! The roof!...'** Mase finally brings it down with the instrumental that folks were originally expecting so that the Soul and the Sense can get down to 'Bizness.'

Our ritual unfolds

The all-around prop recipient Q-tip came in for a few **'Yo-words'** during Busta's set and chilled om deck for the rest of the Rhymes show. During De La's demo, Afrika and Mike G troop in with the **'meenameena meenameena'**. Obviously the declaration of Native reinstatement has been signed, sealed and delivered. To see Baby Bam and Pos kick lyrics through grinning grills together... well, it's enough to send any hip-hop pulse racing (add to that, Mase breakin' the "Heartbeat" on the wheels). "Buddy" generates such a glow of Native Tongue good times that I wouldn't be surprised if Monie hopped in the middle for a verse. So what's up? Q-tip isn't on stage for his verse? Afrika voices his bewilderment in the midst of the Buddy schwing along. Common Sense, Busta and Mighty Most Def groove onstage for this classic posse cut... **Where is Q-tip?**

Tommy ain't my motherfuckin boy

At the back of the stage, what looks like a sixteen square-foot banner of a record label logo hangs duct taped to a blackout curtain. The logo represents the company which promotes De La to the masses, but it seems to contradict the Mase intro claiming **'this is not an industry party'**. About a quarter of the way into the show the banners top right duct-tape unsticks. The banner origamis on itself obscuring any visible trace of industrial markings. I'm still trying to figure out how Mase made it fall...?

...I realize this is one of the most entertaining hip-hop shows I have EVER seen; up there with Kris (pullin' out the hits), and Doug (keeping a show light hearted and energetic)and those Fugee kids ('remixing' classic joints live) and the Kings from Queens for...
Trugoy screams, **'His name is Posdnous!'** (Mase cuts in that note on 'nous!'). Pos responds, **'And Trugoy is his!'** (Mase cuts on 'his!'). Plugs together, **'He's the PA Mase...**(Mase releases the track) **and that's the way it is!'. "It's Like That"** punches its way through Tramps as Pos replaces the line **'...at a record high!'** with... **'...and the Stakes is High'**. Dead that rumor that the Soul can't rock a show. The thunder of "It's Like That" rolls out as the plugs wind into **"Stakes Is High"**, a cloudburst of lightning strikes against current Hip-Hop trends.
They conclude the show with an unnecessary rendition of **"Ring,Ring,Ring..."** the house was already well off the hook...

In a lesser hip-hop show, articulate MC delivery would warrant applause but in a show like tonight's, perfect delivery of" Potholes...", "It's So Easy", "Oodles of Os", "Big Brother Beat" and all the rest of De La's joints, are overshadowed by that very infrequent guest at hip-hop concerts - unexpected fun. Posdnous, Trugoy, Mase and their guests/family take an old school maxim to heart and **'give 'em much more/ than they ever coulda bargained for'.** By designing a well paced show mith a mix of textures, voices and points of reference, the Soul united hip-hop fans behind them once again.

'This goes out to all area cliques/ from the manicured lawns to the project bricks ....'
'...centralized or way out in the sticks/ straight butta hits/ straight butta hits ...'
-DE LA SOUL

this is a remix

- ri0 r0cket va11ed0r

re-entas da stage

Watch the butter fly!

de la de la de la de la de la
soul soul soul soul sou

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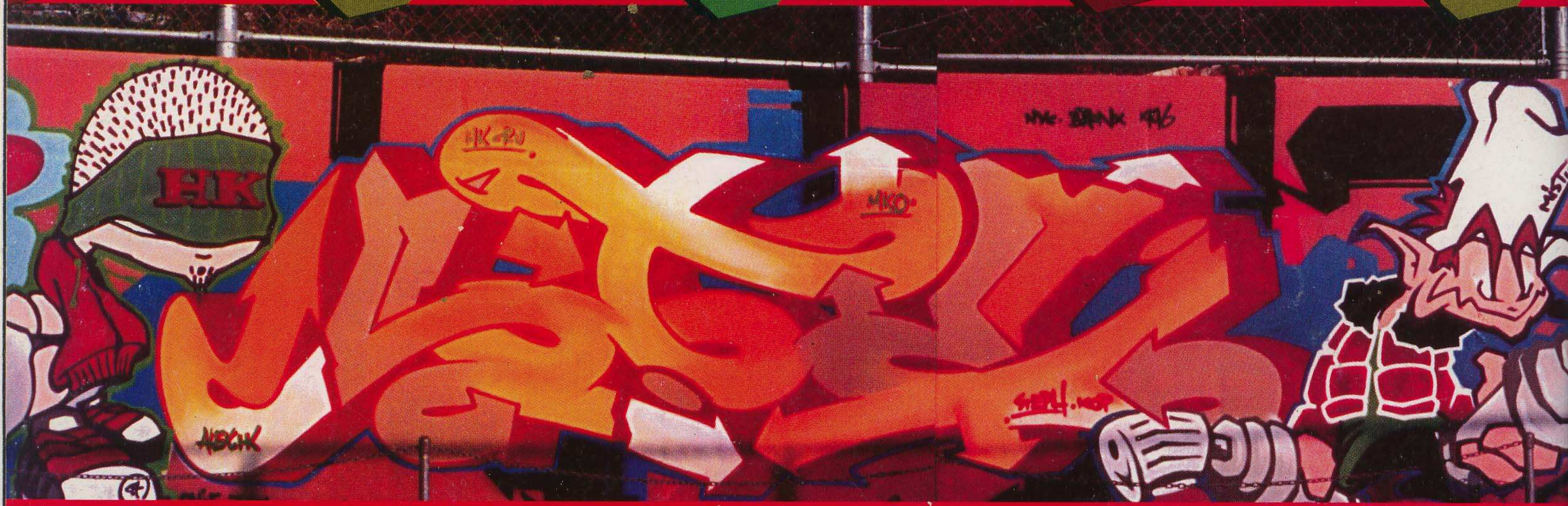
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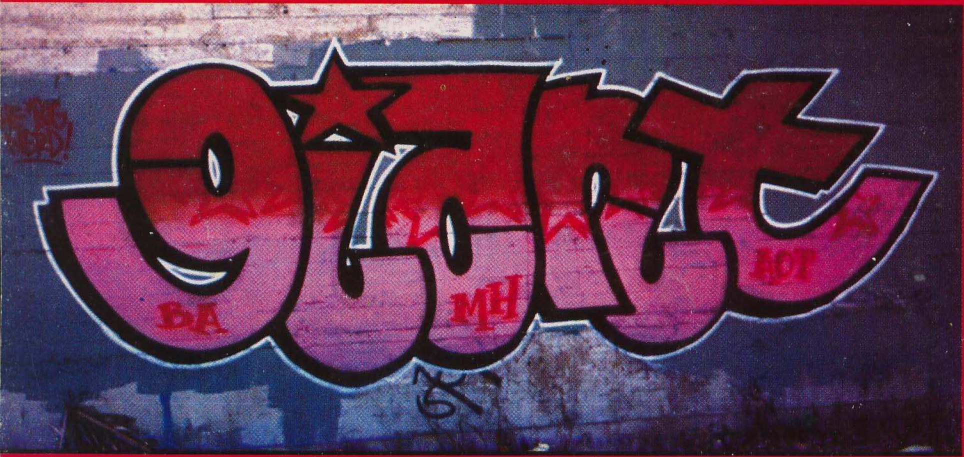

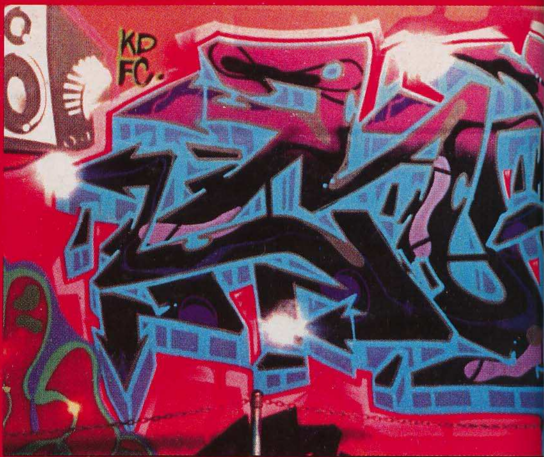

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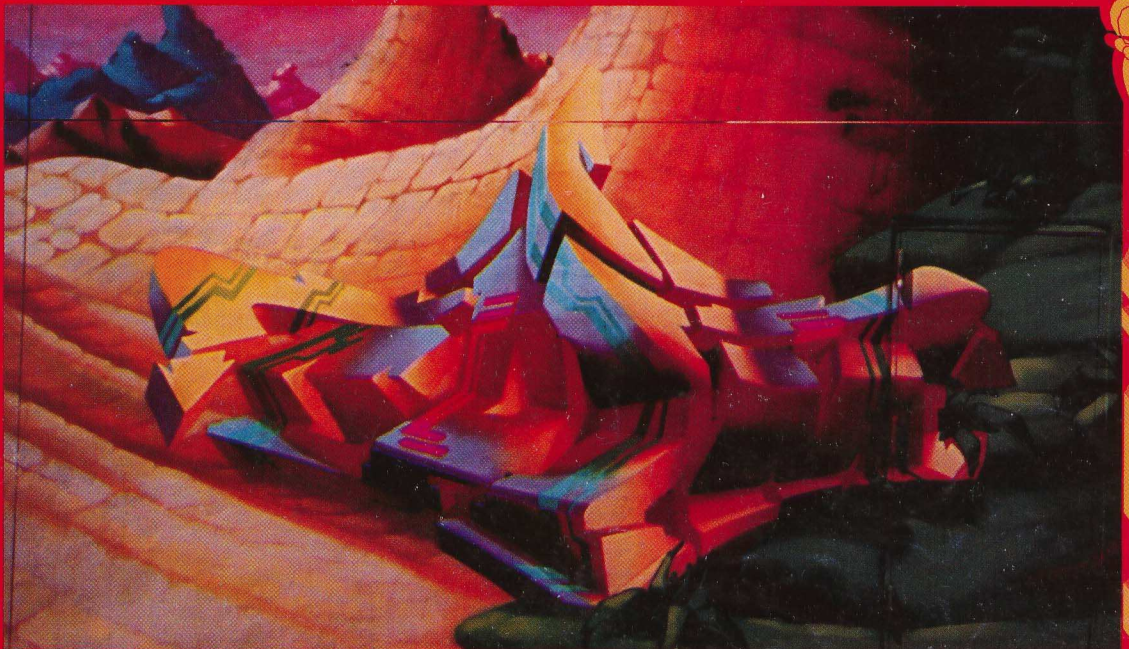

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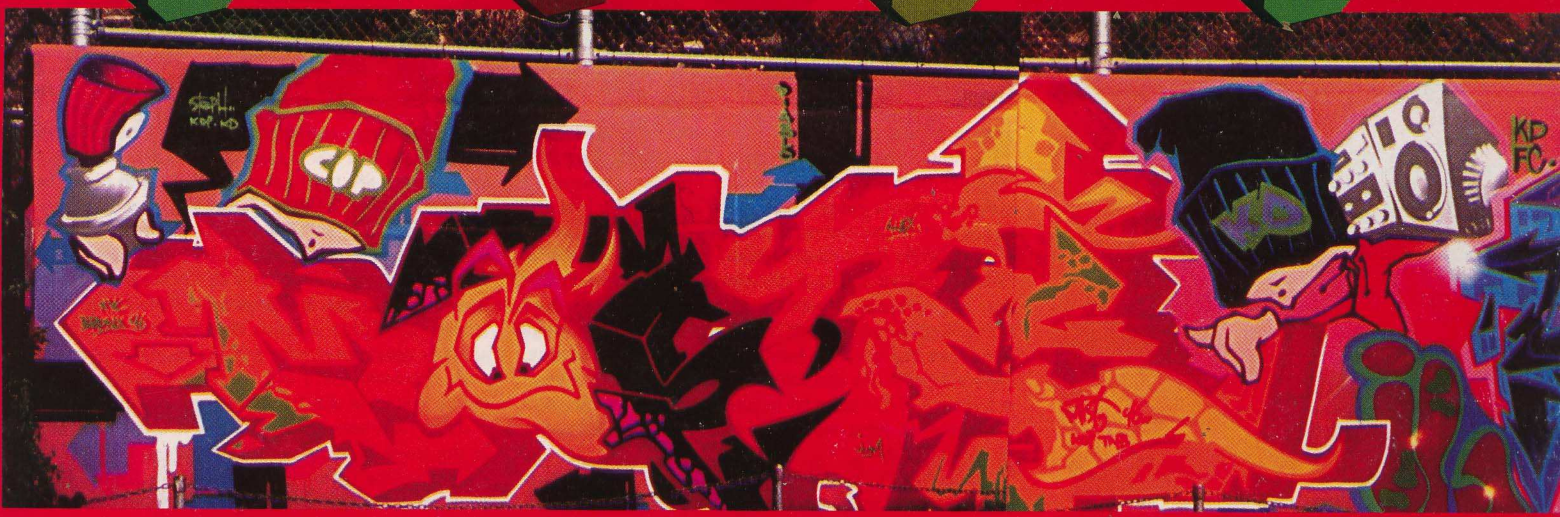


AMAZE
!! SHA-ZAM !

#14

PLAYER OVERLOAD

ICE-T

ICE-T has been a high-post personality in Hip-Hop for over a decade, dun. When the Mobb wasn't Deep, he was on a solo creep. He was steady mobbin' when the Mafia was in j.u.n.i.o.r. high. He's been diggin' the scene in a gangster lean since Snoop was a puppy, etcetera, etcetera. Not only has Ice been around longer than most rappers careers, he's never been less than THE MAN (Which reminds me, I wish I asked him about the movie he starred in as the game for a group of human-hunters. Oh well). What really made me jump at the chance to chew the fat with the cholo is the way he conducts his business. Ice T is a real Mack Daddy. Many claim the title, but Ice wears the belt. He actually had a stable of honeys in Hawaii, but finding the life too limiting, went back to L.A. and started to create a durable, marketable persona. Ice-T in a velvet fedora, black suit with satin lapels and a sneer is a profitable franchise in Tinseltown. Ice T is the Huggy Bear of the 90's, except he's got Starsky sprung and Hutch hoe'in. What keeps him in demand is his mug and his street-cred. He's got a grill that looks like he is Edward G. Robinson's bastard grandson. He's also got a rep that is beyond reproach . . . almost. Sure, he wore funny clothes in "Breakin'", made hard rock records with Body Count, and even kept his jheri curl years past the expiration date. Yet, in spite of the spots on his record, Ice-T lives up to the image he portrays. That puts him in some very limited company amongst Hollywood's Hoes. He is one guy who doesn't get his gabardine slacks dirty trying to get a good role. He *is* the role. Are you gonna write him into your script?

We caught up to Ice at the Parker Meridien Hotel, the midtown power spot for the hip with platinum cards on their hip. Rooms start at $300 a night, and using my limited judgement, I'd say Ice's suite was about $800 per. He greets us at the door, warm and ready to shoot the breeze.

We're here to talk to you about being a star, 'cause that's what you are. What movies are you currently working on?

I'm doing a movie with Harvey Keitel called...

"Even Badder Lieutenant"?

No. it's called "City Of Industry" it's about a night in LA. It's a crazy movie. I'm working on another called "Breaking Point", which is an hour-and-a-half shot in real time about a kid who kills someone, and we roll with him. It's a wild movie. I got some other films, but I'm not trying to say nothing about them 'cause I'm trying to act like I don't want to do them so I can get more money.

So Ice, what kind of things do you demand on the set? What do you need to make yourself comfortable?

I like junk food you know (Oh we know, watching him motor through a King Size Snickers at 10:30 am). I ain't with all that bullshit they bring in, the healthy shit. Bring me some chili dogs and shit. That's what I like - and Kool-Aid. And don't fuck with my friends. When they come see me, I keep them in check, y'know. Other than that, I'm just excited to be there. Oh, and a trailer that doesn't reek with a toilet that flushes.

Does Christopher Walken do anything for you?

Yeah he does, with the right role. He's cool. He's a testy motherfucker.

Harvey Keitel?

Harvey Keitel's the man, that's like my favorite right now. I think on-screen, Bad Lieutenant? You can't out do that motherfucker. He's standing butt-naked in front of women screaming.

When are you gonna play the good guy?

I already did that in New Jack City. I didn't like it so now I wanna play the villian. I like playing villians, that's my shit.

Do you have days where you wake up and wish you were a bigger star?

No, I wish I had more money, but not a bigger star. Right now, if I could hit cruise control on it, I'm perfect. It's like I can move, I can walk, I don't need bodyguards. People walk up to me, "Yo Ice!" Like they know me. It's cool, I can get a meal with that image. I don't wanna be like Micheal Jordan, He can't move, he can't walk, I wanna operate. Y'know, I don't want it. But then if you work harder, you wanna be more successful. I ain't rich, I got fame. There's another level, That Trump level. I'm not there. Y'know I gotta lot of friends in prison, I've got a lot of friends that need shit that I would like to give them. I give out like 20G's a month in 5, 6 hundred dollar loans, so you know I could keep bustin' my fuckin' ass, y'know. I'd like to hit that point where I got 30 million or some shit. A multi-lateral deal where I have my own company that does rap and rock, television, magazines. That's what I'm gonna do some day. . . I'm trying to get money like O.J. in case I kill somebody.

It's time for us to get your rebuttal to all the hype people have generated over the years about the clothes you wore in "Breakin' ". People said you were on some East Coast shit.

The thing of it was, when L.A. first started rapping they were on some New York shit, totally. There was no L.A. rap scene, so you had to be on some New York shit. Everybody in L.A. was wearing fat laces and trying to breakdance. I had a bomber and it was making me cool. So I always tell people, "before you speak on that movie show me a picture of what you looked like the night you went to see that movie". It's easy to look at it now and say it, but let's see what you looked like walking in with your Michael Jackson jacket, so don't front. That was the time and that's what was cool at the time. I was the coolest at the time. You would've felt it at the time, so I'm not embarrassed about it at all. I had spikes, 'cause motherfuckers had to have spikes to be an emcee. That's how it was.

So you still have the fur coats though, right?

DO I !? It's right here, baby.

Verrry nice, and the furry Kangol?

Naw, I killed that.

Awww man!

Niggas bit my steelo, you know what I'm saying. I'd wear 'em and shit, now everybody rocks 'em. I'm not with it, so I gotta go different.

So tell us about the different pendants you wear. You got the .38, the .45 . . .

Right now I got the .45 with the removable clip. (He demonstrates and we're impressed) and the cross, which is really a "T".

Do you get your jewelery custom made?

I had a gang of jewels, right. I used to have 'em like dinner plates and all kinds of shit, so I used to tell people, 'This is my weekday shit. At night it's like POOM, POOM, POOM, you know, all the jewels'. But now, I put on the brakes and slowed up and got some cool shit.

What about the watch?

This watch is a custom-made Rolex. Everybody's wearin' Rolex presidentials. This is a GTX Rolex. A skin diver watch with a turning bezel, so it weighs a little bit more. It's about 80 G's, but I ain't pay that much for it.

So let's say I got 2 girls and I'm trying to roll a little business here, but one of my girls is holding out on me and I know it. What do I do?

What service? Are you pimping straight up?

I'm pimping straight up.

Bitch can not hold out no money. Y'see the thing is you get these people who call themselves players or pimps. They got a girl, she's working and she gives him a percentage of what she makes. That's just like a boyfriend. Get the fuck out of here. Pimping is the act of selling pussy and taking all the money, every single penny, and you regulate what she gets. Now with your problem, there's two ways of handling it, depending on what kind of pimp you are. If you're a gorilla pimp, you beat her ass. I ain't a gorilla pimp. I ain't really into that. Basically, the worst thing you could do to me is cross me, then you will be exiled from the kingdom. Therefore we won't be down. That's the way you must go, because lying is connected to snitching. Go - be gone. Go with that nigga across the street who's gonna whip your ass like that. If you run your shit tight, bitches won't stray, 'cause they wanna be down with you. They love you. You see they don't fall in love, they make love. It's a whole 'nother game beyond the average 'watch television, oh-I'm-down-with-it, I-think-I-could-pimp-a-bitch.' It's not that, it's a lot of romancing your girls, and they fall in love, and then they'll do anything for you. Once that's on then your bottom girl brings another girl in and tells her it's cool. They have to learn to share and then they compete for 1st position. You never treat a hoe better than the money she's making. This is business.

How many girls did you have?

Basically, about 4 call girls and 12 street girls, but I was working with a pimp that had a stable. I came in on an active stable, so I didn't have to set anything up. He was like, "I like you, If you ever want game, come here". I had some trouble in L.A., so I went to Hawaii for like 3 and a half years. I know that game like the back of my hand. I didn't spend a lot of time turning bitches out, I was working in an organization.

So how did you keep it straight with 16 girls?

There was 5 dudes working, it wasn't just me. It was like a big business. Right now they got escort services in NY with 100 girls. It's not hard.

What about Heidi Fliess, how was her game?

Fuck that bitch. Game over.

On another topic, which of hip hop's most popular champagnes do you prefer; Dom Perignon, Moet or Cristal?

I'll tell you like this, Cristal has a pretty bottle, but the shit burns. Dom is the lightest and nicest of the three, but Moet will get you fucked up quicker.

We were intoxicated on the player vibe Ice T was pouring like the drink that bears his name. Our heads were rapidly overcome by the powerful potion he had put us on. We had transcended our playa hating states into being one with all the players, worldwide. Just when we thought the vibe couldn't get any smoother, Oran "Juice" Jones walked into the room. We put our seatbelts on and went into player overdrive.

Mr. Juice, what are you doing these days?

I finished an album with my man Stu Large, and we're looking for a situation for it.

Describe the sound.

Straight player . . .

"HAH! Don't touch that coat !"

Yeah it's a little of that, but on the next level.

Juice, for our readers who can't see you, describe what you're wearing.

Armani and gators.

And those *are* silk socks?

Absolutely. If they're not, I'ma have to kill that bitch. Now don't go gettin' my bitch killed, now.

What kind of tie is that?

I don't know. It's a $400 tie. Are you down with Iceberg Slim? (points to the Iceberg Slim library Ice T travels with.)

Yeah, I think I read Pimp.

Ice: Then you gotta go on to Donald Goins.

Juice: See, that's what seperates Ice from the rest of these cats. They know the terminology, but if you can't properly apply it, it's no use. What's the good of having diamonds if you're gonna keep them in your pocket?

Ice: For these kids today, it's more of a fashion than a lifestyle. When I started with the "player" look, it was an anti-New York style. Out here, they were all baggy clothes and looking thuggish. I didn't know anything about that. My whole life was based on looking nice, having nice things, staying clean. I used to have to wear old clothes and look bummy. I'm trying to get away from all that. I'm trying to have the best shit and leave it for my kid.

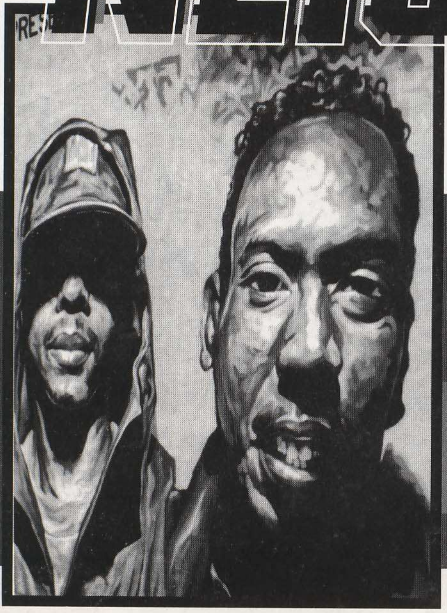
Juice: The secret of being cool is in the game of life you win some and you lose some. When you win, don't laugh too hard, and when you lose, don't cry too hard, because neither lasts too long.

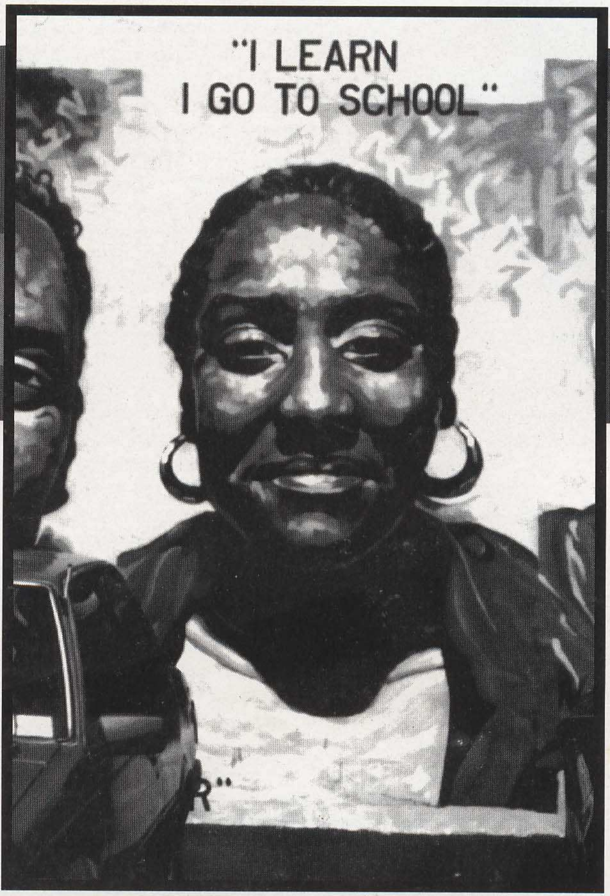
Ice: Oh my God, they just had a player overload

(Laughter) **OTG96!**

WHEN L.A. FIRST STARTED RAPPING THEY WERE ON SOME NEW YORK SHIT, TOTALLY. THERE WAS NO L.A. RAP SCENE, SO YOU HAD TO BE ON SOME NEW YORK SHIT. EVERYBODY IN L.A. WAS WEARING FAT LACES AND TRYING TO BREAKDANCE.

NEIGHBORHOOD





MURAL BY DIZNEY LOCATED IN NYC ON RIVINGTON & STANTON STREETS

PHILLY

THE CIVILIANS ARE FLIPPIN' like a flag on a pole in Sweet Home Philadelphia. For a month straight, the topic of graffiti was front page news of both daily newspapers regularly, and consequently was featured at the top of many newscasts at night. Why? Well for one thing, there's a lot of it, as much as there ever was in Philly's 29 year history of graffiti. For another, It's an election year, and no fewer than three city council members have introduced legislation designed to combat the problem. Lastly, South Philadelphian Dan McGowen created a publicity machine by uniting 80 community groups against graffiti. Now everybody is invited to the bonfire of the vanities, with Credit as the marshmallow du-jour. Credit fits in with the profile that's emerging in the 90's: Writers that are getting caught are turning out to be grown men, 22-to-35 years old. There is a tremendous amount of anger directed at the perps because they are way old enough to know better, and they're writing in the classic Philly way; In flat black paint everywhere they can. So Credit got sentenced to the can, pending appeal. Journalists struggled daily to get a grip on the problem and called in the heavyweight champ of the Philly graffiti sound bite, yours truly.

At press time, I've been interviewed for 6 magazines and / or newspapers, been a guest on 2 radio shows, and was asked to contribute an editorial to another newspaper in a 21 day period. Every journalist whose work I've seen has jerked me in one way or another, and the other articles are still in the bowels of hard drives all across Philly waiting to be flushed out in print. One writer titled his article, "Writing on the Wall" and deserves to be sent back to writing obituaries for his lack of creativity. However, his was the best article written during these hysteric times, for he had a gram of compassion for our position. In fact that's what everybody wants to know, "Mr. Powers, please tell us how the graffiti writers of Philadelphia feel." And I tell them loud and clear;

"Graffiti gives a whole segment of the population, who have no other means, the power of a voice. Whenever one group finds a way to empower itself, it causes another group to feel threatened. When used correctly graffiti is more powerful than TV or a newspaper, because it's message cannot be turned off or put down. You have to respect the fact that there are people out there expressing themselves that don't have to play by the same rules you do."

"Graffiti doesn't destroy property, it causes no damage to the structural integrity of a building. What it does is damage people's perception of their neighborhood. People who strive and struggle to amass their piece of the American Dream get paralyzed with the fear that a man with a spraycan can diminish the worth of their property. Graffiti has become the flashpoint for all of Philadelphia's feelings about race and crime."

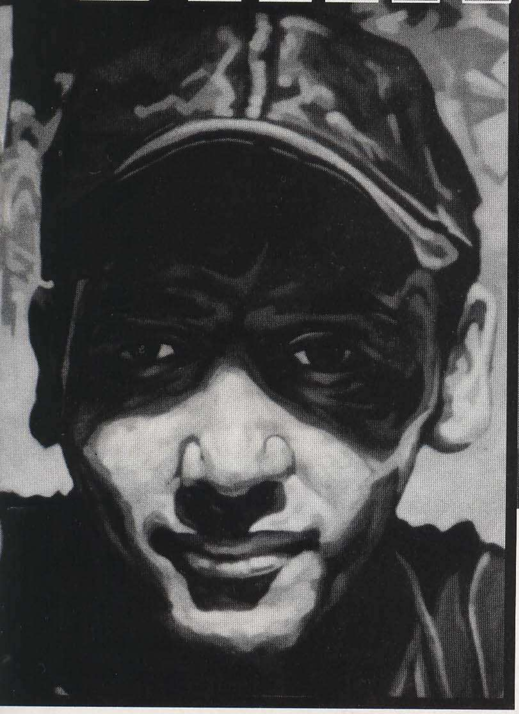
"The More dangerous and illegal you make graffiti, the more attractive it becomes to the youth."

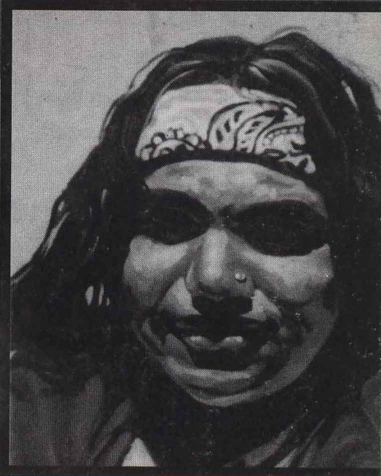
"Do you know how ridiculous that sounds?" Said Judge Shamus McCafferty to the last comment. He's the presiding judge over a brand new graffiti court in Philly, the first of it's kind anywhere. He's on a first name basis with Philly's most wanted writers, and when they get in front of him, he's gonna be sending them to Gratersford, Philly's notorious overcrowded prison. "Oh great" I said, "We got no room for murderers, but you're gonna find room for writers, OK, sure." The Judge replied, "That's a cop out. When writers hear the jail cell door slam behind them, they'll stop writing for sure."

What the judge is telling us (and all of you should read this very carefully) is that property matters more than people in the last of the 9D's. After Judge McCafferty sentences enough writers to jail, will graffiti become galvanized with a purpose?

"Do you know how ridiculous that sounds?" The one thing that the judge's court may do is kill street bombing. That mode of marking has been holding up the evolution of the more creative aspects of graffiti expression for years now. Remember when tags were the only tool in the grafftist's chest. Then softie letters and wild styles and computer rock all came to prominence, but the tag was the fundamental form. Nowadays the tag is an obsolete expression for one simple reason: People don't read them anymore. Civilians haven't read any tags since TAKI 183. Back then, graffiti was seen as relatively harmless, an interesting distraction. Now the tag is an endless source of animosity to tie populace. When people think of graffiti, what do you think immediately comes to mind - Style? Murals? Nope, they think of a flat black tag on a new car. They think of crime, of property values dropping, of black kids, and of white kids trying to be black. Since the effectiveness to convey the intended message is limited to graffiti writers, you're wasting your time, unless you wanna be hated. In that case, rock, rock-on. I can't reason with the populace and ask them to look at the

CRIME WATCH





positive side of graffiti, because their world view is limited to the width of their property. In order to change that perception, the artists among us need to get busier than ever. You've got a nation to awaken, and a bunch of posing politicos to put to bed.

"I'm not a politician!" said Dan McGowan, " I'm a citizen who's sick of graffiti." So he gets a gang of people together in the name of buffed walls and holds a press conference to criticize the Mayor for not consulting him about anti-graffiti strategies. Congratulations Dan, you're now a politician. Part of the Mayor's plan was to call in the National Guard to buff walls in North Philly. He said ignore the drug sales there, forget about the random acts of violence, just get that graffiti buffed. The new style of buffing walls is to just cross out the tags with green bucket paint. Now the walls look really horrible, and they still want to try and convince me this isn't the campaign season off to an early start. Maybe if they really tried to improve the living conditions of the poor, maybe if they attacked a more prevalent, and more detrimental problem, like drugs or domestic violence, or shitty schools, or the 27 other problems that aren't on the surface, but deep rooted and hard to remove, I'd believe it. They just wanna drop 3.1 million dollars, pose like superheros, and count the votes in November.

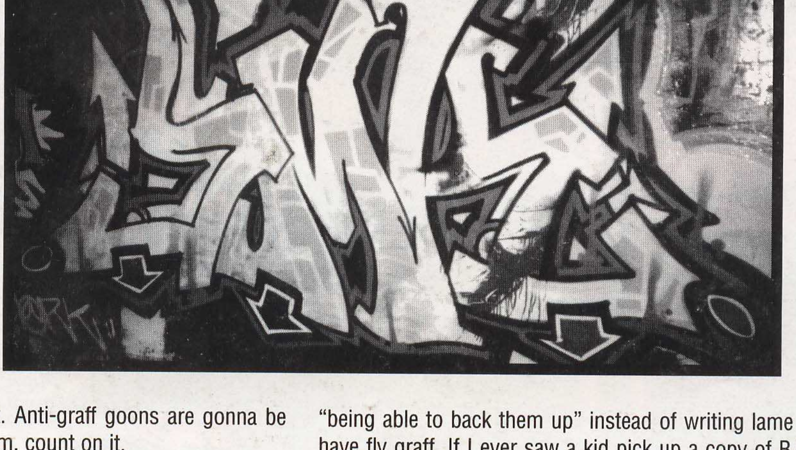
Graffiti is about a lot of things to a lot of people, but what everybody wants, from any angle, is juice. That's why there's 50 magazines and more coming out everyday. That's why you've got political campaigns and individuals getting publicity from their anti-graff crusades. But when all of the artists in the graffiti movement truly get their shit together the anti-graff guys will be ass-out. Some of the artists, like Dizney are already on-point, changing the way society looks at graffiti. He has way more juice than any bomber. He can function in the world and have people welcome his presence. He can pick out almost any wall he wants and get it with his top notch rep. He is a fully realized adult changing the way people perceive spray paint on a vertical surface. He is empowered, and in turn empowering whole communities with his craft. Anti-graff goons are gonna be pumping gas when writers come correct like him, count on it.

As I was writing this piece, I asked Rust what he thought if the tag died today. He smiled a mischievous grin and said, "No man, I love the graffiti that's untamable." Don't we all. I wish everybody could roll across the landscape like the Terminator, getting they swerve on without regard to the law. However, going to jail for graffiti isn't "Keeping it Real©". It's removing yourself from the board too soon. Y'see, all the political brouhaha, the citizens uprising, the buff bitties doing their do and everything else this hot topic is generating tests the medium we have aligned ourselves with. Is graffiti going to finally rise up out of it's own diapers? Will it get motivated to move people, to inform, to truly represent the way that word originally meant; to depict the life of a people with insight and passion? I know I'll try in my work, will you try in yours?

DC

THE GIFT OF GAB

"When was the last time you did a fill-in?" I asked Upski, and I never got a "straight" answer. He proceeded to answer questions that had nothing to do with graff. So why is this washed-up herb faking jax on the real haps? After living in D.C. my entire life, having been shot at for being the wrong color, or being robbed at gunpoint with OTG's own Papa Es, I can honestly say I didn't see any "Bomb The Suburbs" posters in Anacosta, few in N.E., and even less in N.W.

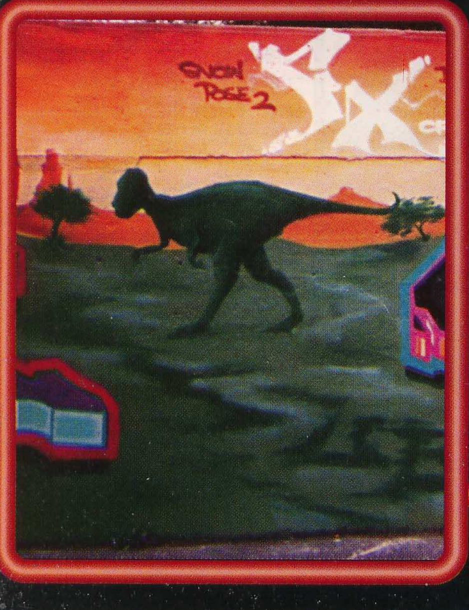


And what about being stuck in O'Hare during the blizzard of '96. What else to do but ride the "el" trains and look for some B.T.S. posters or maybe an UPSKI piece. I saw neither, much less a dope production. The government got the city on lock. Graff is tarnishing like ya mom's Copperware set.

I would be more worried about your skills and "being able to back them up" instead of writing lame articles about what cities have fly graff. If I ever saw a kid pick up a copy of B.T.S., I'd smack him like a bitch and shove a copy of "Spray Can Art" down his throat for some real graff knowledge. You sucker. **- A Vandale.**

TRUE WALL OF FAME

HARLEM 1996 CIUDAD DE LA FAMA



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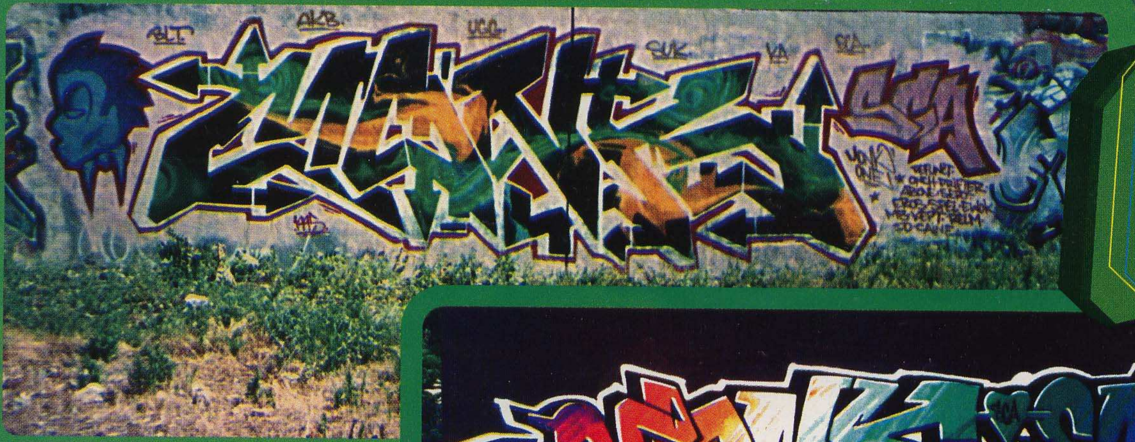
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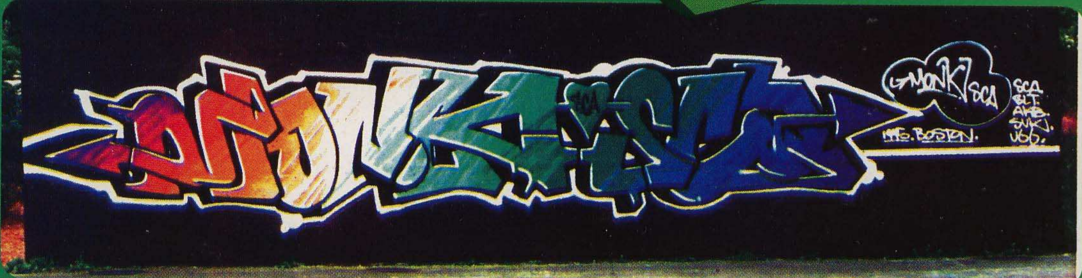
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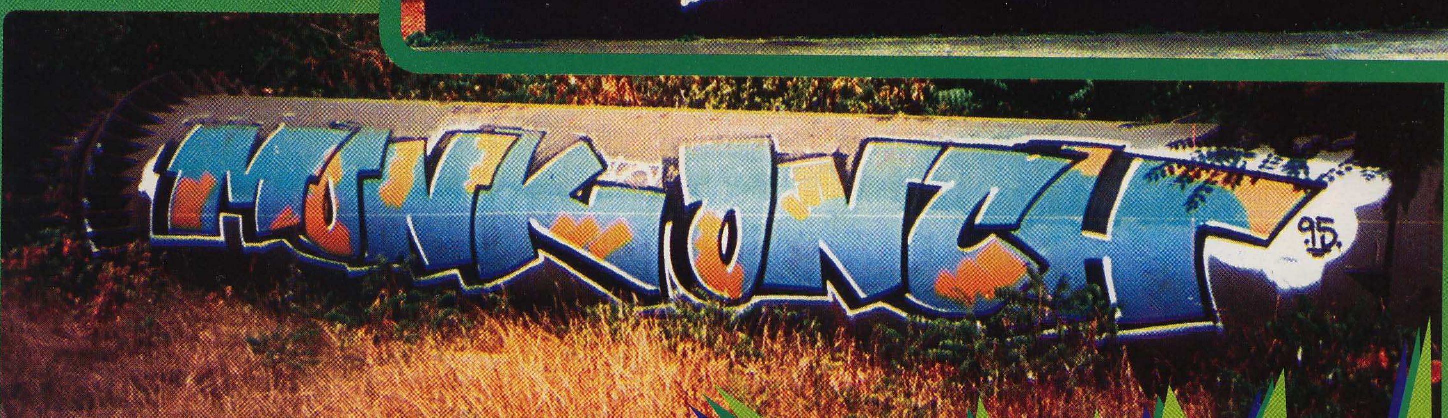

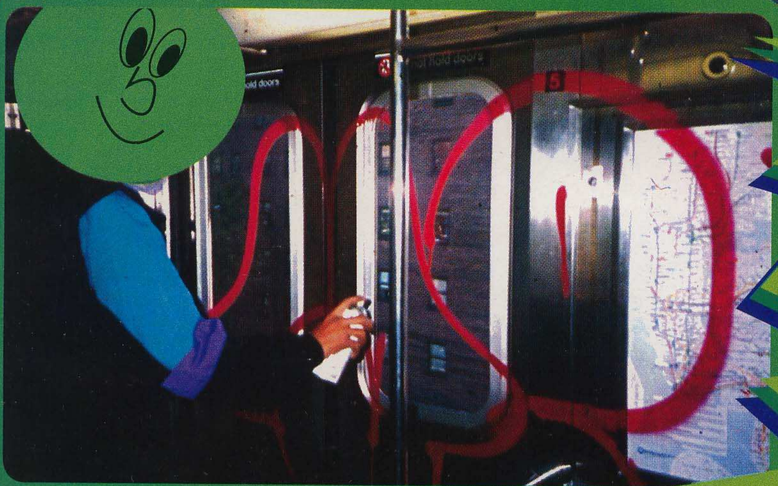

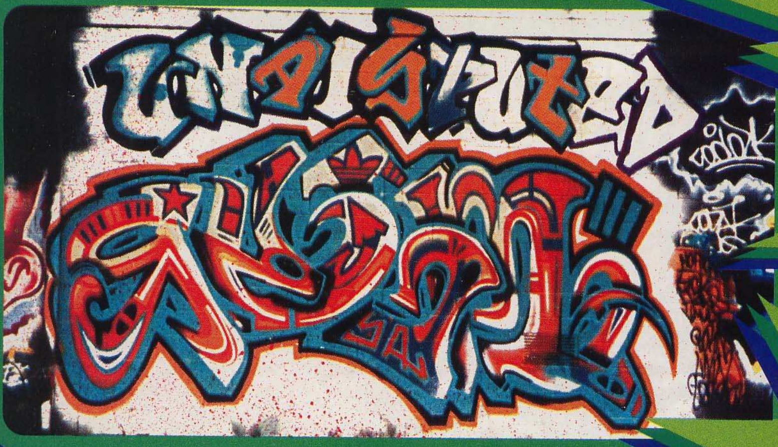

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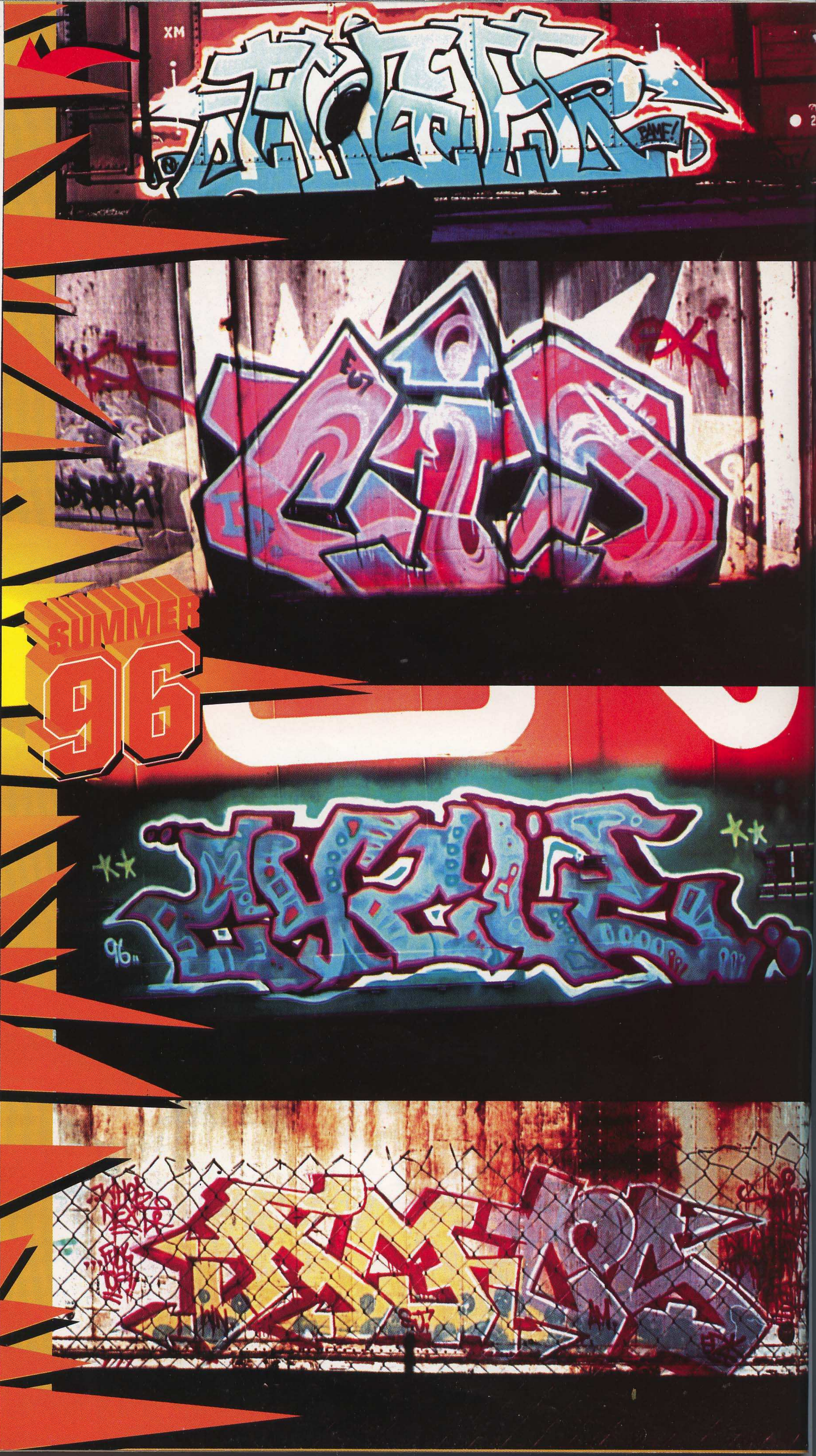

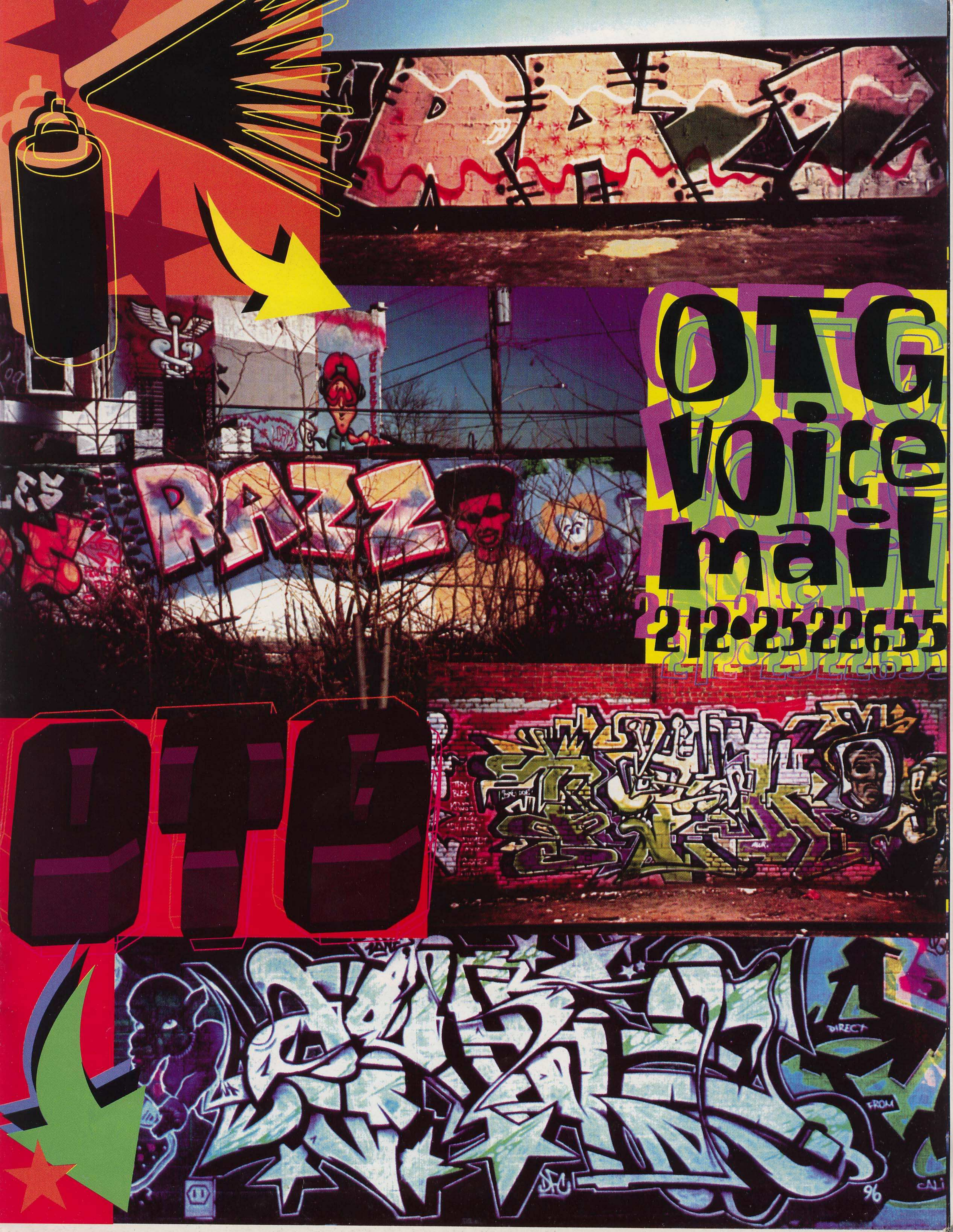
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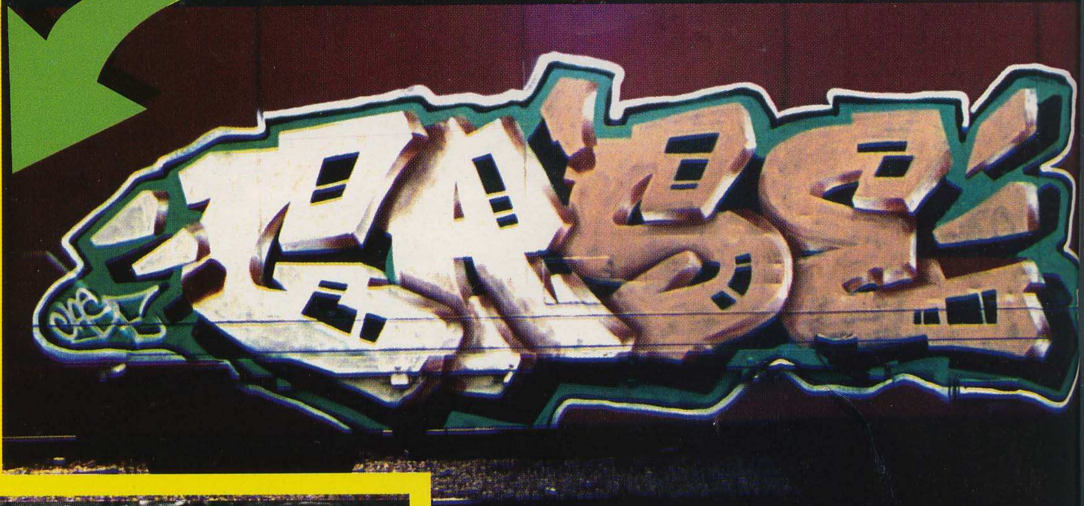

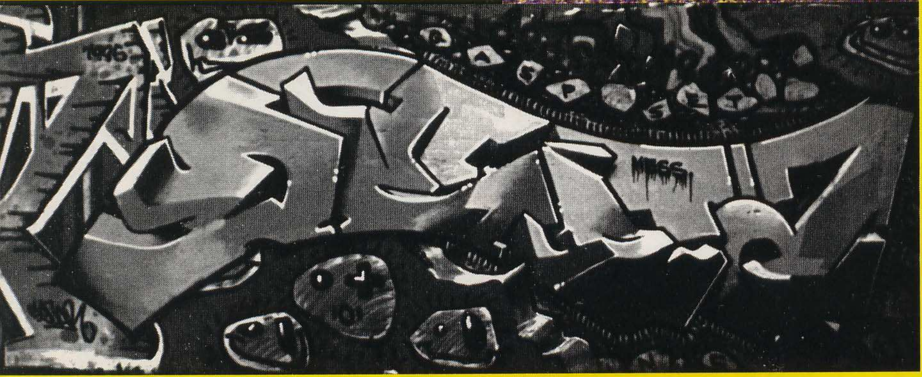

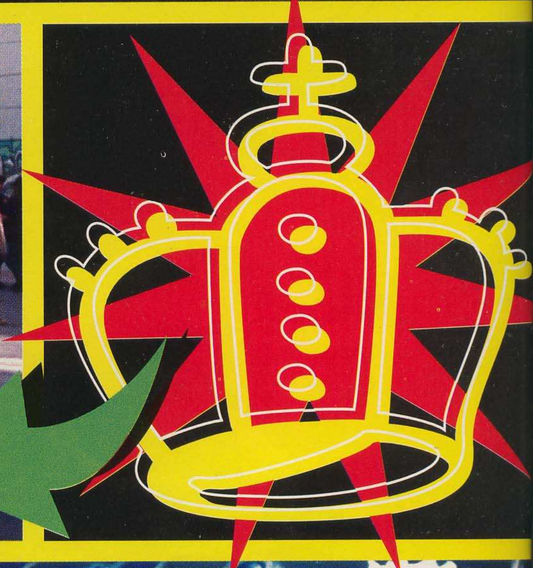

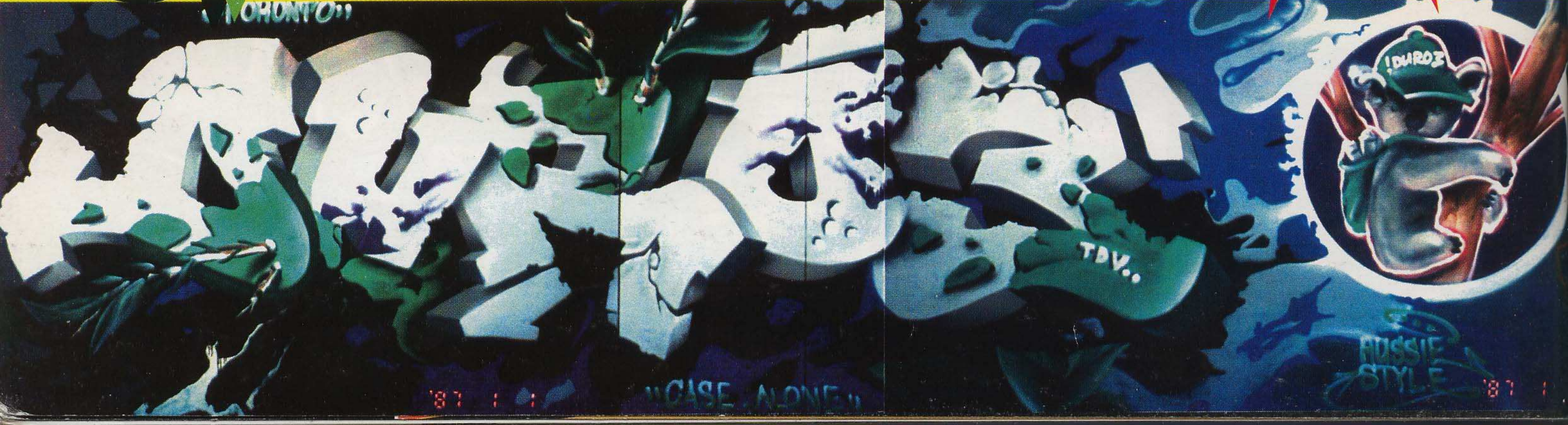
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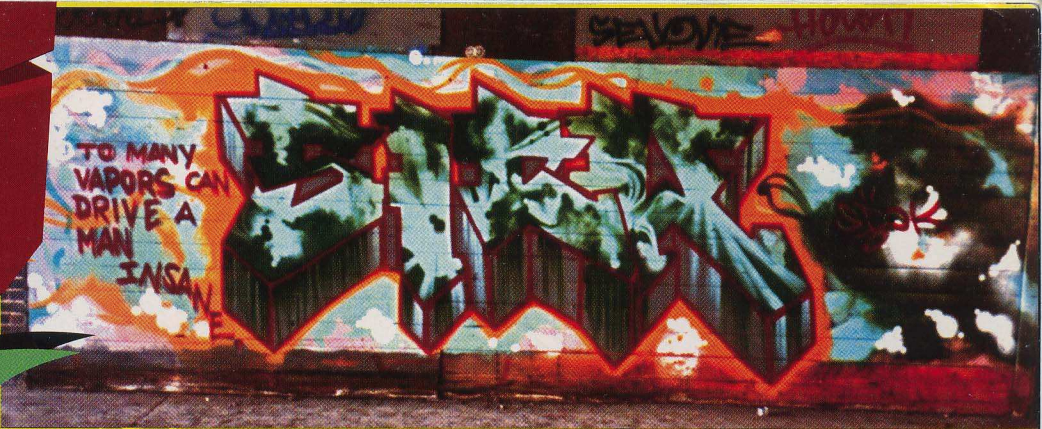
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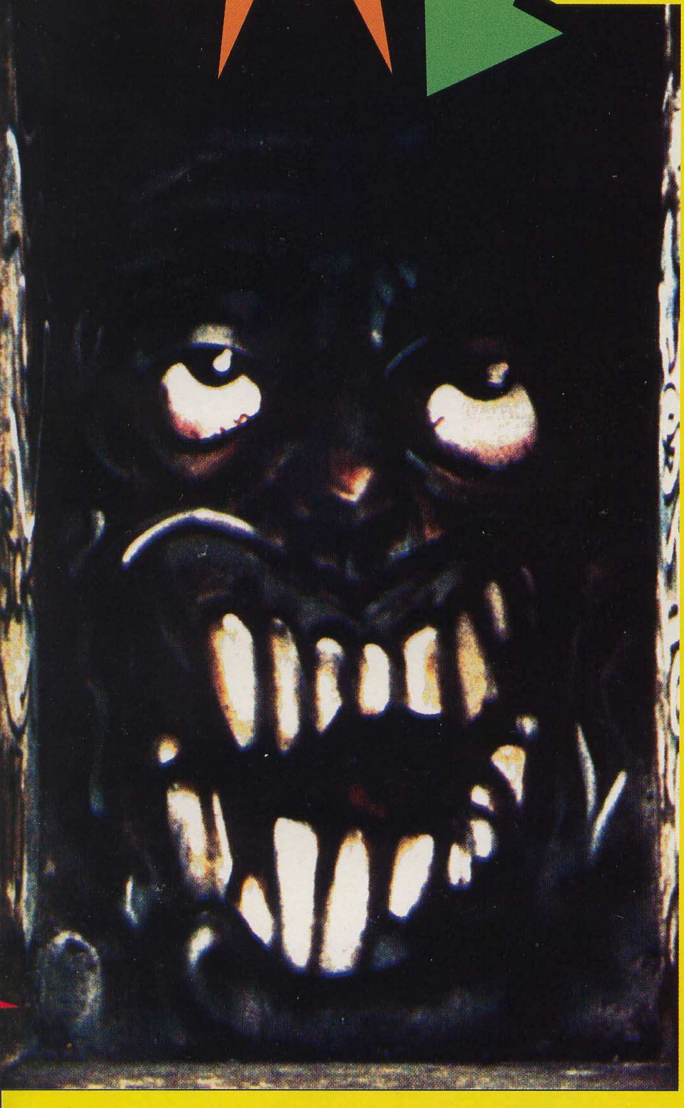

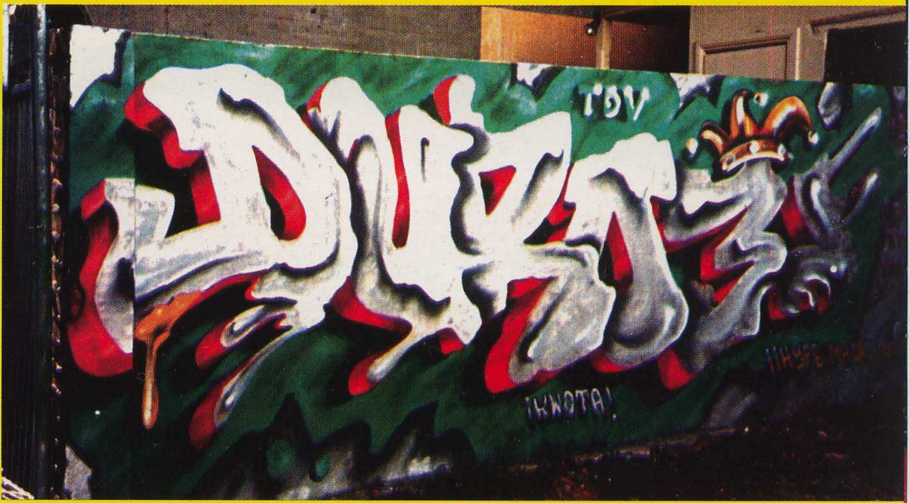
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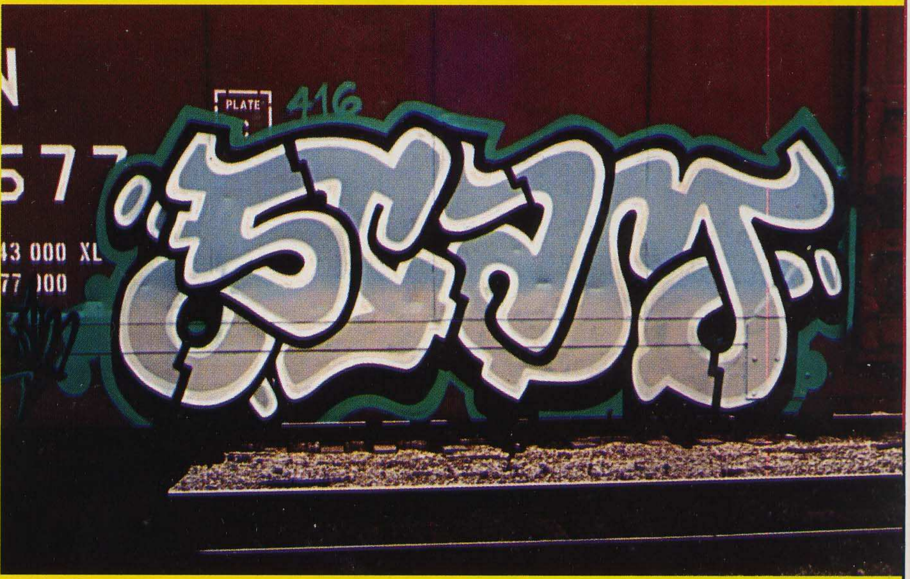
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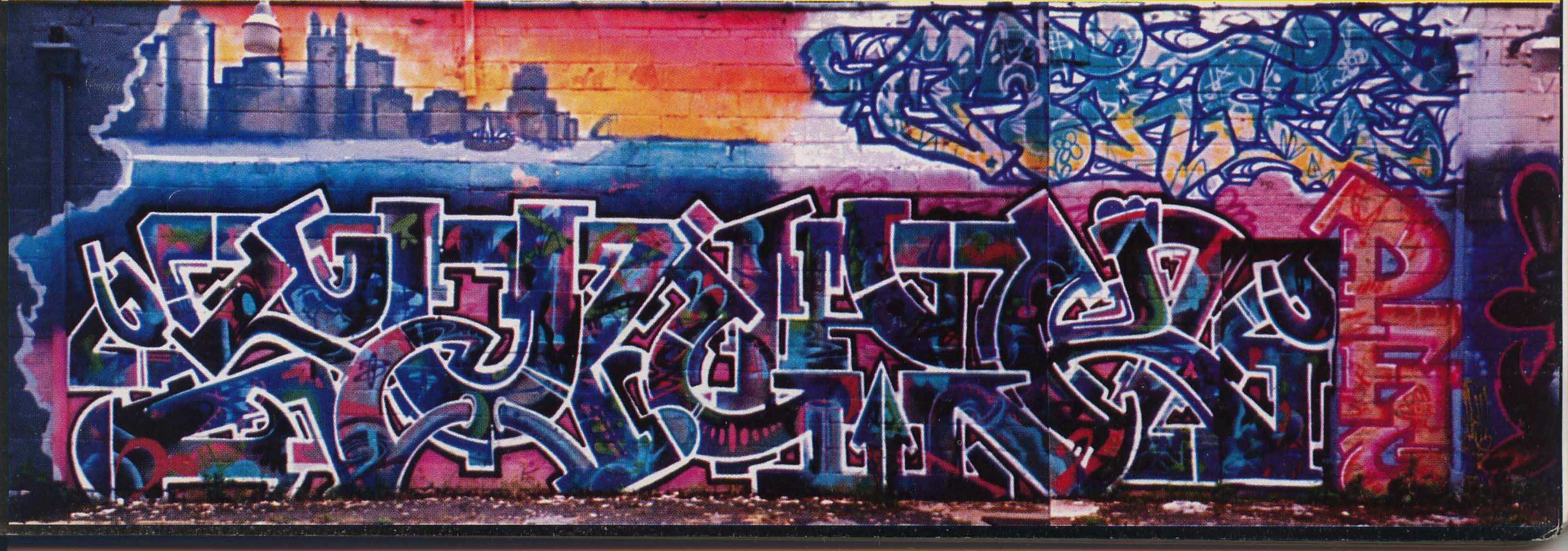

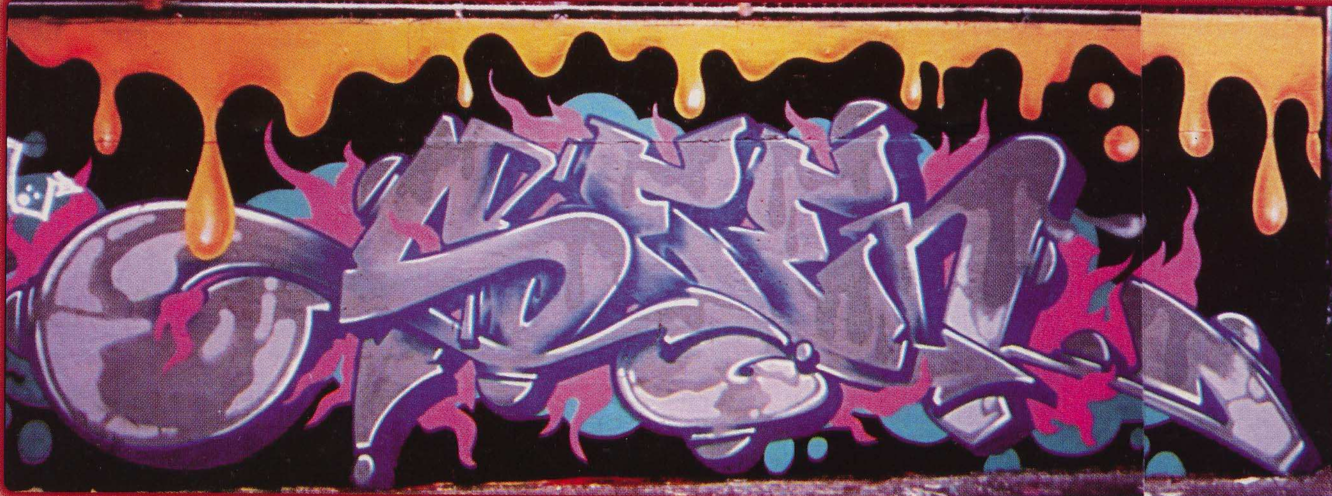

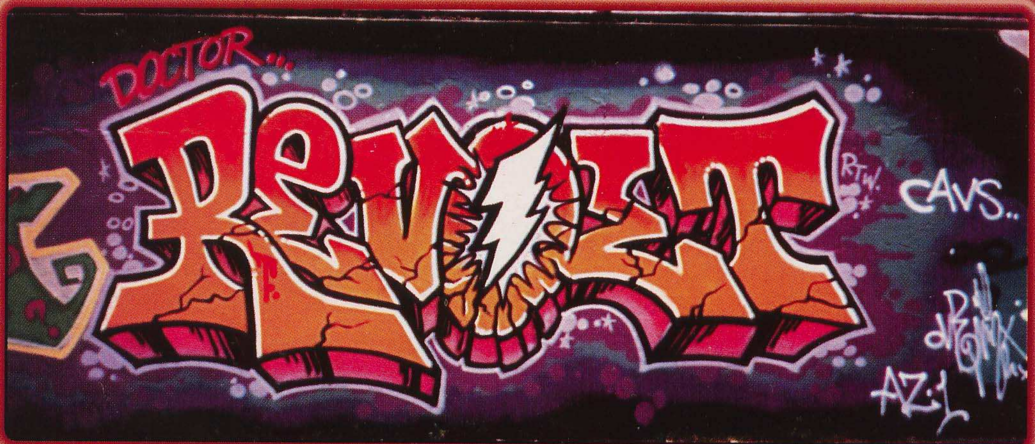
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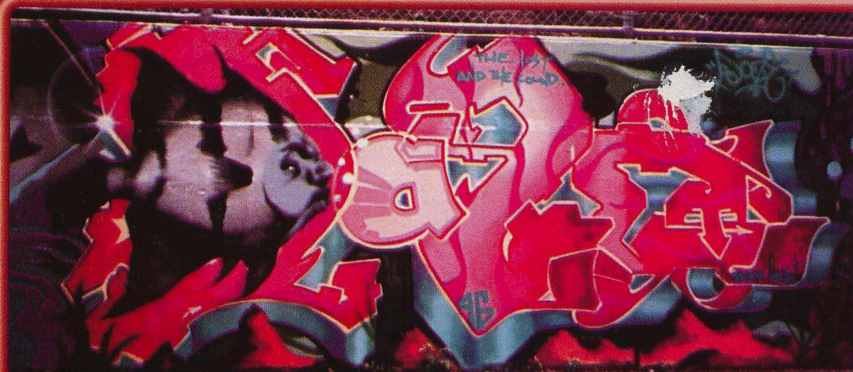

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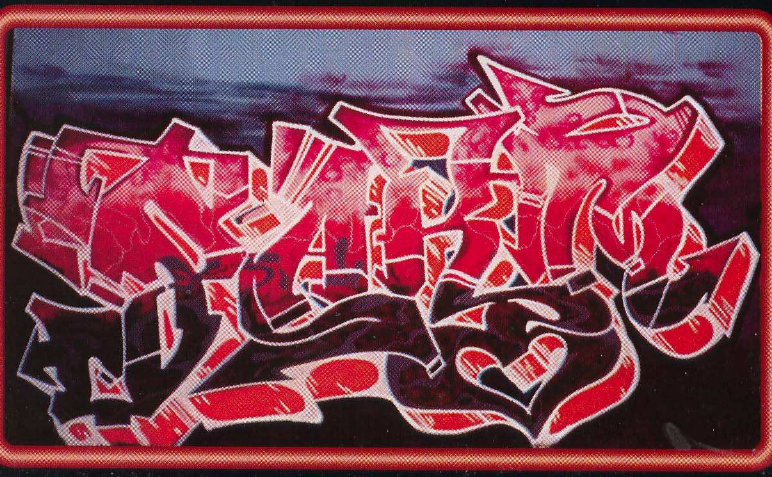

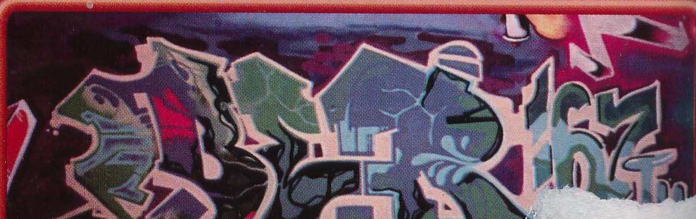

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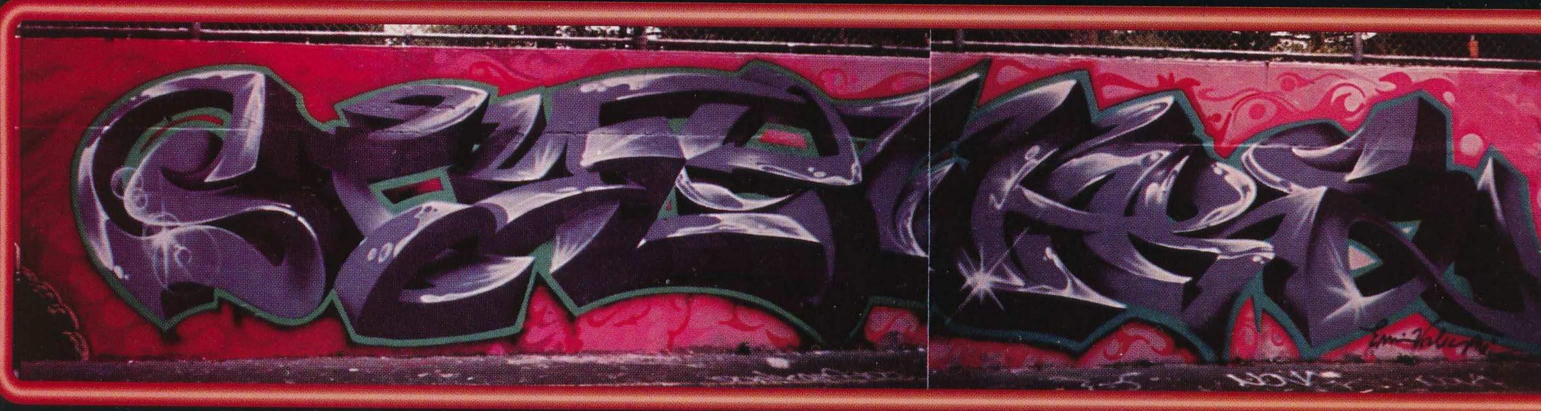

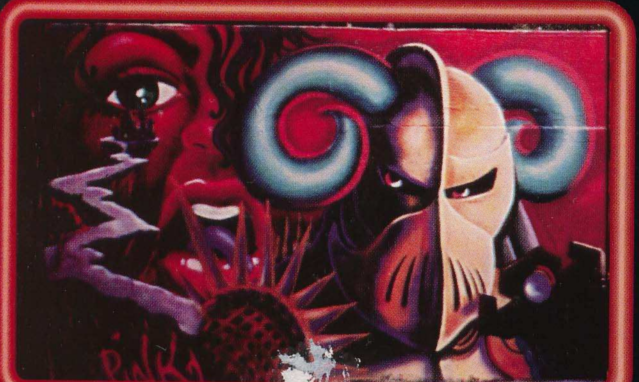

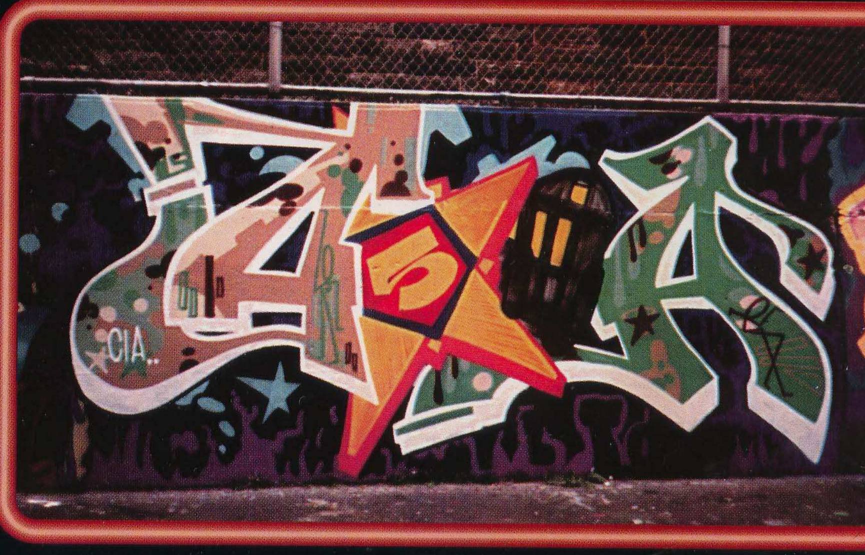

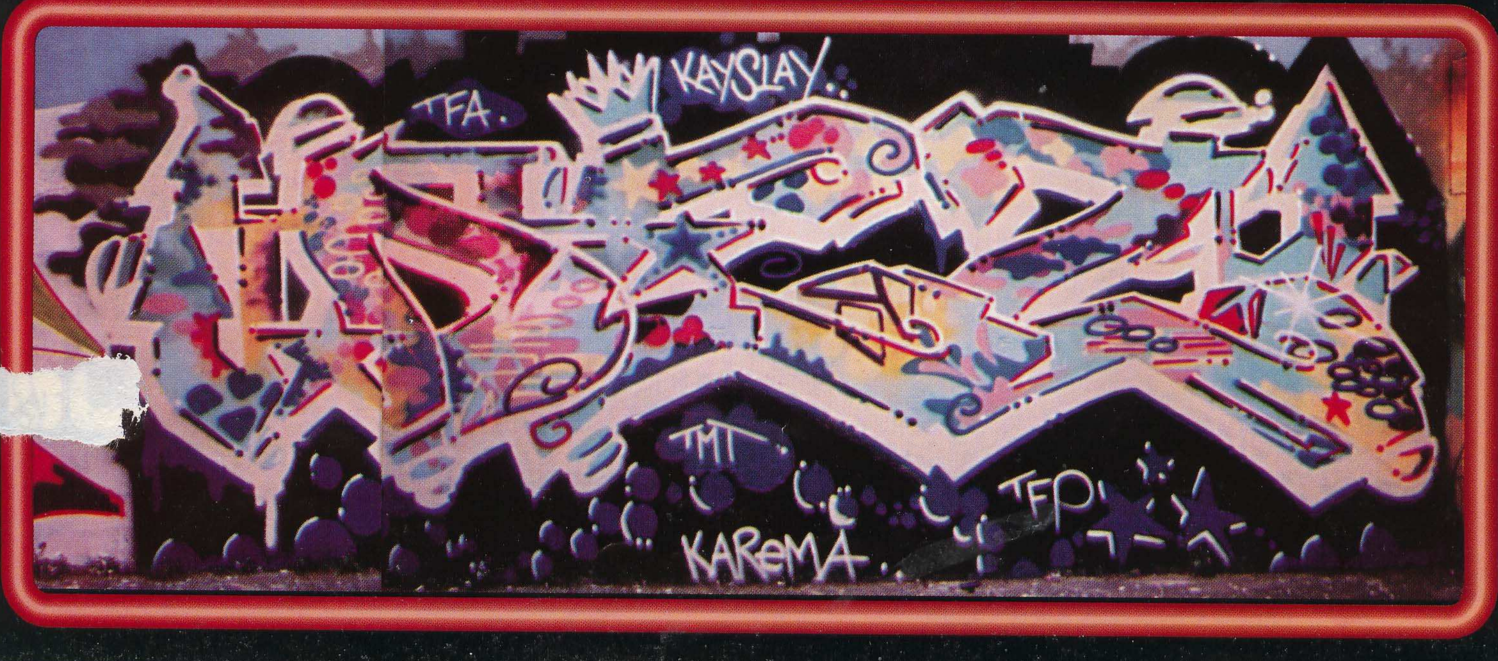
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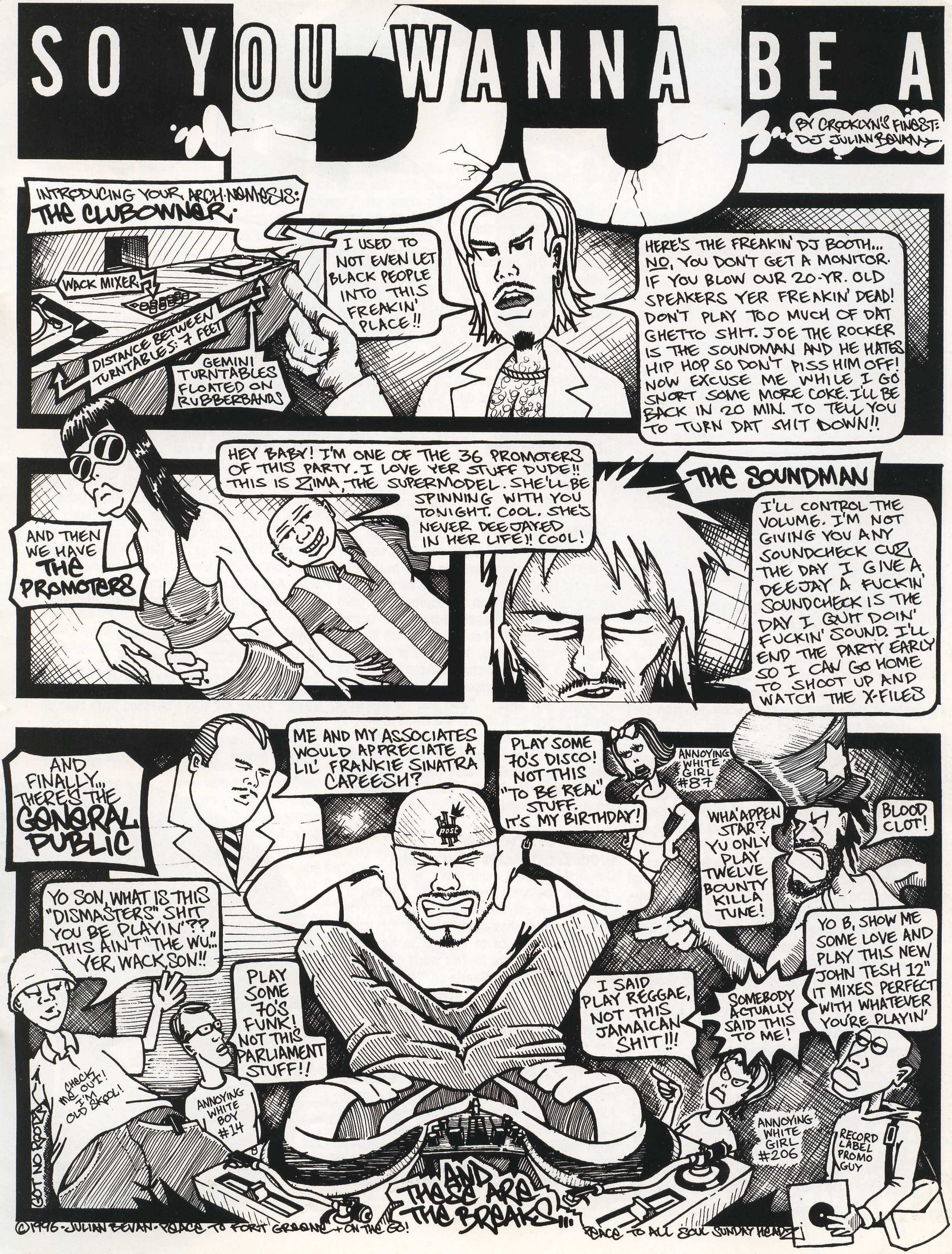
INTRODUCING YOUR ARCH-NEMESIS: THE CLUBOWNER.
WACK MIXER
DISTANCE BETWEEN TURNTABLES: 7 FEET
GEMINI TURNTABLES FLOATED ON RUBBERBANDS
I USED TO NOT EVEN LET BLACK PEOPLE INTO THIS FREAKIN' PLACE!!
HERE'S THE FREAKIN' DJ BOOTH... NO, YOU DON'T GET A MONITOR. IF YOU BLOW OUR 20-YR. OLD SPEAKERS YER FREAKIN' DEAD! DON'T PLAY TOO MUCH OF DAT GHETTO SHIT. JOE THE ROCKER IS THE SOUNDMAN AND HE HATES HIP HOP SO DON'T PISS HIM OFF! NOW EXCUSE ME WHILE I GO SNORT SOME MORE COKE. I'LL BE BACK IN 20 MIN. TO TELL YOU TO TURN DAT SHIT DOWN!!
AND THEN WE HAVE THE PROMOTERS
HEY BABY! I'M ONE OF THE 36 PROMOTERS OF THIS PARTY. I LOVE YER STUFF DUDE!! THIS IS ZIMA, THE SUPERMODEL. SHE'LL BE SPINNING WITH YOU TONIGHT. COOL. SHE'S NEVER DEEJAYED IN HER LIFE!! COOL!
THE SOUNDMAN
I'LL CONTROL THE VOLUME. I'M NOT GIVING YOU ANY SOUNDCHECK CUZ THE DAY I GIVE A DEEJAY A FUCKIN' SOUNDCHECK IS THE DAY I QUIT DOIN' FUCKIN' SOUND. I'LL END THE PARTY EARLY SO I CAN GO HOME TO SHOOT UP AND WATCH THE X-FILES
AND FINALLY... THERE'S THE GENERAL PUBLIC
ME AND MY ASSOCIATES WOULD APPRECIATE A LIL' FRANKIE SINATRA CAPEESH?
PLAY SOME 70'S DISCO! NOT THIS "TO BE REAL" STUFF. IT'S MY BIRTHDAY!
ANNOYING WHITE GIRL #87
WHA'APPEN STAR? YU ONLY PLAY TWELVE BOUNTY KILLA TUNE!
BLOOD CLOT!
YO SON, WHAT IS THIS "DISMASTERS" SHIT YOU BE PLAYIN'?? THIS AIN'T "THE WU"... YER WACK SON!!
CHECK ME OUT! I'M OLD SKOOL!
GOT NO ROOTS
PLAY SOME 70'S FUNK! NOT THIS PARLIAMENT STUFF!!
ANNOYING WHITE BOY #14
I SAID PLAY REGGAE, NOT THIS JAMAICAN SHIT!!!
SOMEBODY ACTUALLY SAID THIS TO ME!
YO B, SHOW ME SOME LOVE AND PLAY THIS NEW JOHN TESH 12" IT MIXES PERFECT WITH WHATEVER YOU'RE PLAYIN'
ANNOYING WHITE GIRL #206
RECORD LABEL PROMO GUY
AND THESE ARE THE BREAKS!!!
PEACE TO ALL SOUL SUNDAY HEADZ

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WORD SOUND & POWER

"Word sound and power is the symbol of man, seen? That's what we use amongst Babylon. We don't use a stick nor a stone nor a gun. They don't tell you that our policy is non-violent; non-violent, non political."

-Ras Bongo Israel

There is a theory regarding politics and culture which holds that it takes thirty years for policies to become trends, take hold and make their effects seen and felt in society at large. This theory seems to hold equally true for reggae music as it does for New Deal economics and bell-bottomed fashion.

As dancehall bounces into the mid and late 90's, a sizable chunk of its stars have shed a good deal of their gangsta-angst and opted for the wisdom of orthodox Rasta. Such a phenomenon has many implications, primarily the realization that boasting is one thing, but criminal badness is short-lived, both in terms of record sales and longevity (how often does a popular singer these days age beyond twenty five years and remain alive, much less on top of the charts?).

Reggae has always recorded its own history by way of recycling itself on older beats and rhythms, respinning them with newfound inspiration. This is both out of respect and admiration for precedent and to challenge it. It is an oral tradition passed on from African culture to Jamaican. For this reason, some would find no surprise in dancehall reggae's tendency towards ever rootsier vibes. It was merely a matter time they would say. Surprising or not, this trend is definitely worth noting. It reveals an important parallel with what took place back in the mid to late 1960's when ska and rock-steady rhythms gave way to roots reggae. And it proves the theory of the 30 year cycle.

If reggae has become Jamaica's foremost oral tradition, a means of preserving Island culture by recording it into the popular music and dance, then it owes such a credit to the Rastaman; that is, the original Nyabinghi Dread from the hills, not some Rankin' this or Shaggin' that. Roots heritage is reggae in its purest form, live musicians, real instrumentals, proverbial folk-sayings and sparse, rugged rhythms. Musically, it evolved out of rude boy ska and rock-steady rhythms in West Kingston round about 1967-8. Outlaw, ghetto music, rude boy riddims were dancehall favorites whose boastful lyrics and subtle ironies openly espoused the recklessness and danger common and yet so fashionable in Jamaican street culture.

Then, as now, the musical form changed noticeably as musicians and certain street youths found strength and musical inspiration in the rebellious, red-eyed orthodoxy of Rastafarian teaching. They espoused the Afro-centric religion for its Biblical security and stability. As a way of life, Rasta attracted many for its intense spirituality and aim of personal enlightenment. It granted its disciples a creative form of relief from the pressurized world of day-to-day competition endemic to such a poor and historically oppressed region.

Roots reggae was "Word Sound and Power" incarnate. Lyrics turned fire and brimstone. "Chant down the walls of Babylon" meant break the physical and mental barriers which limited, suppressed and alienated the conscience daily. Celebrate the suffering together as a road to humility, righteousness and unity in Zion the Promised Land of our forefathers. As downtown Rudies and uptown Rockers turned Natty Dread, religious and revolutionary rhetoric like "War inna Babylon!" and "Repatriation is a must, Hallelu-Jah!" replaced lighter ska and rock-steady "Hoot nannie hoot hoot!".

Spiritually, "roots" music evolved out of Rastafarianism, a cultural phenomenon that developed in Jamaica back in the 1930's. The first Rastas came from staunch followers of Marcus Garvey. These Garveyites, as they were known, were members of the Universal Negro Improvement Organization, a nationalistic movement founded by Garvey which sought to redeem and re-educate Jamaicans in their African heritage and eventually repatriate these ex-slave Africans now living in the "New World". As they looked to Africa for a sense of identity and self-worth, a certain sect of these Garveyites, all of them staunchly religious, seized upon scriptural evidence (such as Revelation 5:25) that proclaimed a Divine King from the East, the Lion of Judah, the Root of King David, would prevail on earth. Coincidentally or not, this happened at the same time as a king was coronated in Ethiopia, with the title Ras Tafari (literally "King of Kings, Elect of God"). This new King chose for himself the name Haile Selassie I ("Power of the Holy Trinity") and ruled with much pomp and circumstance. Albeit with little regard for the starving masses in his countryside.

Using the Bible as reference for their prophetic wisdom, the first Rastamen began praying to Selassie I the Savior and preaching his name in connection with Garveyism. The African King thus became the central figure of African redemption and repatriation in the eyes of these Jamaicans. Worshippers became known as Ras Tafaris or Rastamen. As they versed themselves in the Bible and "Creation", as well as African culture and the Herb, the Rastamen learned of the Niyabinghi Order. A Congolese and Ethiopian sect formed in the mid 1930's, its aim was to overthrow the forces of colonialism through racial warfare.

The Rastamen took to calling themselves Niyamen and thus the roots of Rasta Niyabinghi were formed. Niyabinghi (also nyabinghi) is central to Rasta and roots reggae. It deals with sounds that stretch back to Africa, a mystical connection formed during church groundations and meditation. Niyabinghi is embodied by the chanting and druming of African burra beats which relate to the heartbeat. They link Rasta to Mother Africa, to Original Creation of the cosmos and to the birth of mankind.

This Niyabinghi percussion and creed is the basis of reggae, especially roots music. As reggae emerged, this Afro-centric percussive element fused with the bouncy ska grooves. Every instrument has a percussive role, often including the vocals. The "One drop" of the drum and bass are at the core, vocals and guitar riffs are added but kept in check to relate back. Everything is repeated and overlapped into a hypnotic, trance-inducing style. Count Ossie was the first musician to spread Niyabinghi from his home in Waricka Hill, East Kingston to the recording studios and the Jamaican mainstream. Musicians such as Toots Hibert soon picked up on the musical potential of such recordings and thus added this element to their sound and gave birth to the roots foundation which, to sum up the next thirty years, brings us back to today.

Niyabinghi style and Rasta creed has permeated everyone from Shabba Ranks to Buju; despite the heavy tendency towards Twelve Tribes membership. (More on this "distinction" later) Roots music is coming back not only in Kette beats but as sources for sampling and inspiration for lyrics. Dancehall reggae and associated DJ styles are like the leaves on the branches of the 30 year old reggae plant. A resurfacing of the roots sound is essential. Reggae would be a tree without roots, figuratively and quite literally, without a knowledge of its history.

LPS by the LB

Since the only member of our staff who has any juice is Mr. Proppps (how *does* he get all that fly free stuff?), it's kind of hard to bring you an album review section that is as up-to-the-second as it should be. What we really need is someone to work five days a week sweatting publicists. If you've got enough gas to keep 'em going please send a resume. The job doesn't pay, but if you're good at it, you'll be hit off with lots of free T-shirts and get to go to all the industry parties and battle famous emcees for finger snacks. If they had more buffets instead of overcrowded open bars, and started making promo pants, you could actually make a living and stay dipped at the same time. (The pants thing might be a perfect idea since I hear that M.C. Hammer is getting ready to make a comeback. Free Hammerpants for everyone!)

The long-awaited debut from **Heltah Skeltah**, ***Nocturnal***, is finally here. While we've been hearing the name for a couple of years now, it wasn't until recently, when they blew up the spot with "Leflah" as two-thirds of the Fab Five, that we were able to bear witness to the full flavor that they had to offer. Rock and Ruck are a classic duo, punctuating each others punch lines perfectly, and delivering just what the doctor ordered, Hip-Hop that's raw like sushi, but there's nothing fishy about it...so dig in.

Part of the Hip-Hop soundscape for years (since Jaz's "Hawaiian Sophie"), **Jay-Z** has finally delivered that package that we've all been waiting for. ***Reasonable Doubt*** is his debut L.P. Jay is super hot this year. There's the smoothed out "Can't Knock The Hustle" featuring Mary J. Blige, "Brooklyn's Finest" which has Jay trading verses with the Notorious B.I.G., the freestyle-ish "22 Two's", and the to-ill-to-be-ignored DJ Premier produced "D'Evils". Jay-Z is smooth enough for the ladies, and rough enough for the fellas. It would be reasonably safe to say that there's NO doubt about his qualifications.

The most anticipated debut has been **Sadat X's** solo. Cameo king and much-sampled emcee, his ***Wild Cowboys*** L.P. is finally here. There's an all-star line up of producers including Buckwild, Pete Rock, Showbiz, and Da Beatminerz, and guest emcees the Money Boss players, Grand Puba, and Sean Black. There's a debate as to whether Sadat can hold his own for an entire album, and who am I to judge? So, you're just going to have to buy it or read more about it elsewhere. And don't think I didn't actually listen to the album, 'cause I did. I'd just like to know what other people think.

Plugs one, two, and three are back from their *Buhloone* trip, and ***Stakes Is High***. I think we've jocked **De La Soul** enough already in this issue. You know what to do.

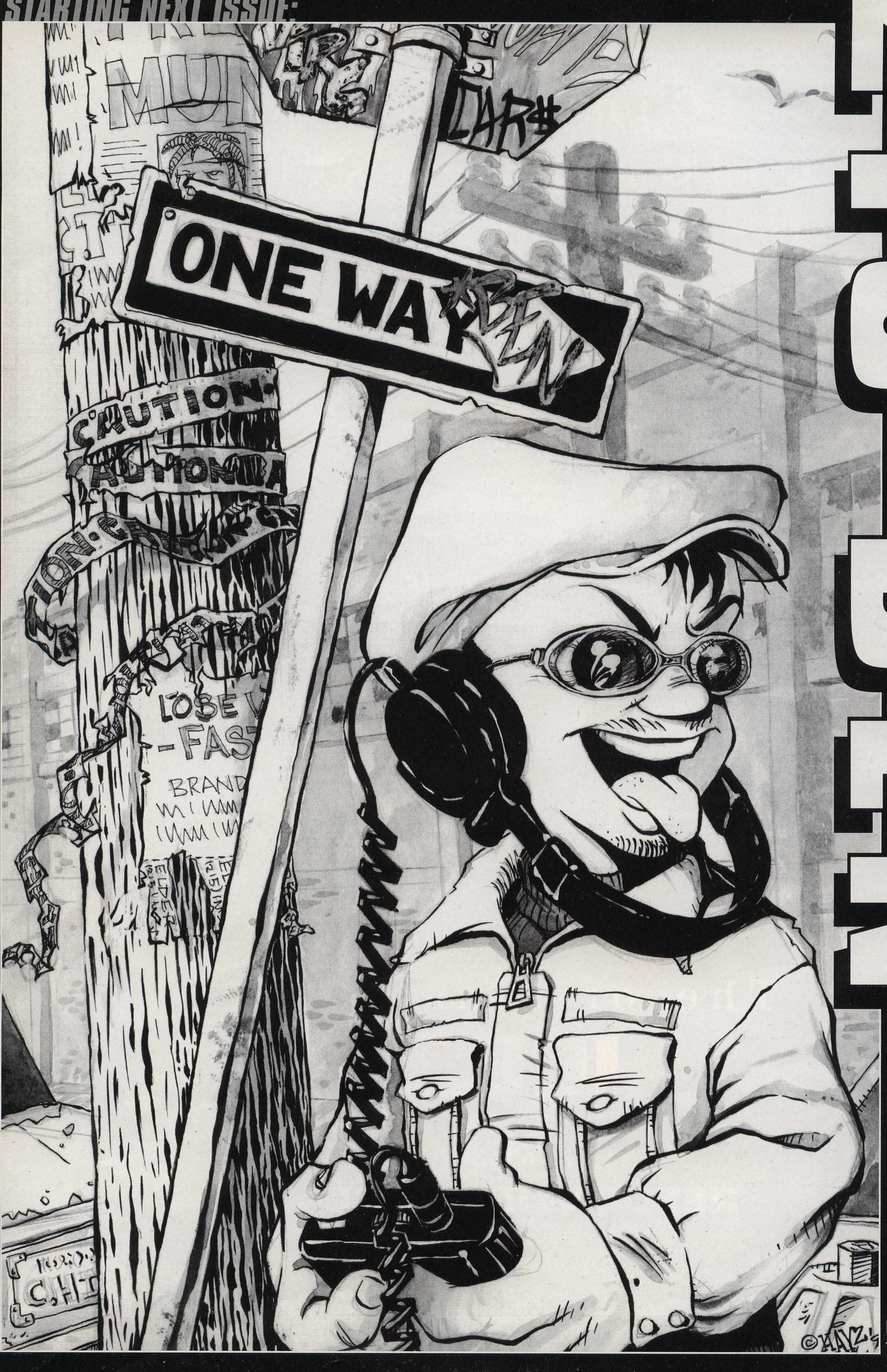
America Is Dying Slowly is the red Hot Organization's all Hip-Hop album to help fight A.I.D.S. A super line up donated (free) their music to this project. **Wu-Tang**, **De La**, **Mobb Deep**, **Pete Rock**, **The Lost Boyz**, **Common**, **Da Beatminerz**, **Fat Joe**, **Sadat X**, **Diamond D**, etc., etc. All the proceeds go to the cause, so you really need to take that ten your were going to spend on a dime bag and buy this.

The biggest surprise albums of the summer are a triumvirate of compilations. **Hip-Hop Classics Volume One** and **Volume Two** are stupid fresh! Someone finally got it together and put out two quality collections from Hip-Hop's golden years. **Volume One** goes like this: "Eric B. Is President", "Top Billin'", "You're A Customer", "The Bridge", "La Di Da Di", "Make The Music With Your Mouth Biz", "Freaky Tales", "Boyz 'N The Hood", "Rebel Without A Pause", "Words I Manifest"...and the list goes on. As for **Volume Two**: "You gots To Chill", "My Philosophy", "Fuck Tha Police", "Vapors", "Looking At The Front Door", "6 'N The Mornin'", "Talkin' All That Jazz", "All For One", etc., etc. Everything is perfect, except for volume one's corny cover, but I was too busy doing the Wop to care, which reminds me, there's no L.L. anywhere. 'Sup wit Dat? Number three is the ***Pass The Mic*** album, featuring "The Symphony", "Dwyck", "Buddy", and "Live At The Barbeque", to name a few. What a great idea. It's like a Hip-Hop history lesson, so buy 'em for your kids, your little brother, or the kid next door - 'cause they probably think Wu-Tang is old school. Class is in session, so you should stop guessin'.

And then there is **Prince Paul**. Who? The lovable Hip-Hopster behind De La Soul's debut, DJ of the legendary Stetsasonic, and part-time Gravedigger. ***Psychoanalysis (What Is It?)*** is Paul's solo debut. It's complete madness, and I mean that in the best possible way. Released by Brooklyn's tiny WordSound Recordings, this is the Prince's masterpiece. It's funny, sad, serious, disturbing, ridiculous, and absurd, at various points. If anyone else had made this album I'd probably dismiss it as post Hip-Hop intellectual crap. But, the man who basically invented skits on wax can do whatever the fuck he wants. Even a bass track, which he does ("Booty Clap"), and I love it. It made me laugh, cry, and most importantly, sit with my drink, and think.

Album reviews are basically bullshit. All they are is a collection of opinions about current and upcoming musical releases. Each review is *one* person's opinion. What if he or she has different tastes than you? If you go by their opinion, you may miss something that could have been your favorite shit for months. Don't believe everything you read. If you can't afford an album, copy it from a friend who can, but always listen to everything, otherwise you'll never know. And remember, this too is just my *opinion*.

STARTING NEXT ISSUE: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